This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

**Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

**About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

HW NRBV C

Digitized by Google

17491.901.5 (IV

Harvard College
Library

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

# The Works

OF

# LORD BYRON.

II

Digitized by Google

FIRST EDITION . . . July, 1900
*Reprinted* . . . . . March, 1904

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

# The Works

OF

# ...RD BYRON.

...W REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

## ...rs and Journals. Vol. IV.

EDITED BY

ROWLAND E. PROTHERO, M.V.O.,
FORMERLY FELLOW OF ALL SOULS COLLEGE, OXFORD.

LONDON:
...N MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
NEW YORK: CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS.
1904.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

# The Works

OF

# LORD BYRON.

II

A NEW, REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

## Letters and Journals. Vol. IV.

EDITED BY

ROWLAND E. PROTHERO, M.V.O.,
FORMERLY FELLOW OF ALL SOULS COLLEGE, OXFORD.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
NEW YORK: CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS.
1904.

Digitized by Google

17491.901.5 (11 of Works)

HARVARD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
Dec. 13, 1945

Digitized by Google

# PREFACE.

WITHIN the dates covered by the fourth volume (November, 1816—March, 1820) are included Byron's residence in Venice, his visit to Rome, and a portion of his sojourn at Ravenna in the Palazzo Guiccioli. It is the time of *Manfred*, of the last Canto of *Childe Harold*, of the first four Cantos of *Don Juan*.

To this period belong 173 letters, 56 of which are, it is believed, now published for the first time. Among the new materials are seven letters to Richard Belgrave Hoppner, as well as those to Mrs. Leigh, the Hansons, John Murray, and Wedderburn Webster. The letters to Mrs. Leigh are printed, by permission of the owners of the copyright, from the originals in the possession of Mr. Murray.

The text of 138 letters has been prepared by collation with the originals. No collation has been possible in the case of 31 of the letters printed by Moore, including 15 to himself, 9 to Hoppner, 3 to William Bankes, 2 to Countess Guiccioli, 1 to the Editor of Galignani's *Messenger*, 1 to Captain Hall. The letter to Colonel Wildman (p. 270) is reprinted from Washington

Digitized by Google

Irving's *Miscellanies*, and that to Elizabeth, Duchess of Devonshire (p. 178) is printed from a copy in the possession of Mr. Murray, compared with the text given in Mr. Vere Foster's *Two Duchesses*. The two letters to Lady Byron (pp. 66 and 268) are printed from the drafts only.

It may be worthy of notice that the last letter in the volume, dated March 31, 1820, and addressed to Hoppner, is numbered 366 in Moore's *Life* (1830); in Halleck's American edition of Byron's *Works* (1849) it is numbered 431; in this edition it is the 785th.

R. E. PROTHERO.

October, 1899.

Digitized by Google

# LIST OF LETTERS.


1816.

| | | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 613. | Nov. 6. | To the Hon. Augusta Leigh | 1 |
| 614. | Nov. 11. | To John Hanson | 5 |
| 615. | Nov. 17. | To Thomas Moore | 7 |
| 616. | Nov. 25. | To John Murray | 13 |
| 617. | Dec. 4. | ,, ,, | 17 |
| 618. | Dec. 9. | ,, ,, | 19 |
| 619. | Dec. 19. | To the Hon. Augusta Leigh | 22 |
| 620. | Dec. 24. | To Thomas Moore | 25 |
| 621. | Dec. 26. | To John Hanson | 33 |
| 622. | Dec. 27. | To John Murray | 34 |

1817.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 623. | Jan. 2. | To the Hon. Augusta Leigh | 37 |
| 624. | Jan. 2. | To John Murray | 38 |
| 625. | Jan. 24. | ,, ,, | 45 |
| 626. | Jan. 28. | To Thomas Moore | 47 |
| 627. | Feb. 15. | To John Murray | 52 |
| 628. | Feb. 19. | To the Hon. Augusta Leigh | 55 |
| 629. | Feb. 25. | To John Murray | 56 |
| 630. | Feb. 28. | ,, ,, | 59 |
| 631. | Feb. 28. | To Thomas Moore | 59 |
| 632. | March 3. | To John Murray | 63 |
| 633. | March 5. | To Lady Byron | 66 |
| 634. | March 9. | To John Murray | 68 |
| 635. | March 10. | To Thomas Moore | 72 |
| 636. | March 25. | To John Hanson | 75 |
| 637. | March 25. | To Thomas Moore | 76 |


Digitized by Google

| | | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 638. | March 25. | To the Hon. Augusta Leigh | 82 |
| 639. | March 25. | To John Murray | 83 |
| 640. | March 31. | To Thomas Moore | 88 |
| 641. | April 2. | To John Murray | 91 |
| 642. | April 4. | To Samuel Rogers | 95 |
| 643. | April 9. | To John Murray | 98 |
| 644. | April 11. | To Thomas Moore | 101 |
| 645. | April 14. | To John Murray | 105 |
| 646. | April 14. | ,, ,, | 109 |
| 647. | April 26. | ,, ,, | 112 |
| 648. | May 5. | ,, ,, | 115 |
| 649. | May 9. | ,, ,, | 116 |
| 650. | May 10. | ,, ,, | 121 |
| 651. | May 12. | To Thomas Moore | 121 |
| 652. | May 27. | To the Hon. Augusta Leigh | 123 |
| 653. | May 30. | To John Murray | 124 |
| 654. | June 4. | ,, ,, | 126 |
| 655. | June 8. | ,, ,, | 131 |
| 656. | June 14. | To John Hanson | 132 |
| 657. | June 14. | To the Hon. Augusta Leigh | 133 |
| 658. | June 14. | To John Murray | 134 |
| 659. | June 17. | ,, ,, | 138 |
| 660. | June 18. | ,, ,, | 140 |
| 661. | July 1. | ,, ,, | 141 |
| 662. | July 8. | ,, ,, | 144 |
| 663. | July 9. | ,, ,, | 146 |
| 664. | July 10. | To Thomas Moore | 147 |
| 665. | July 15. | To John Murray | 150 |
| 666. | July 20. | ,, ,, | 153 |
| 667. | Aug. 7. | ,, ,, | 154 |
| 668. | Aug. 12. | ,, ,, | 156 |
| 669. | Aug. 21. | ,, ,, | 158 |
| 670. | Aug. 26. | To John Hanson | 162 |
| 671. | Sept. 4. | To John Murray | 163 |
| 672. | Sept. 12. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 166 |
| 673. | Sept. 15. | To John Murray | 168 |
| 674. | Sept. 17. | ,, ,, | 170 |
| 675. | Oct. 12. | ,, ,, | 171 |
| 676. | Oct. 23. | ,, ,, | 176 |
| 677. | Nov. 3. | To Elizabeth, Duchess of Devonshire | 178 |
| 678. | Nov. 14. | To Charles Hanson | 180 |
| 679. | Nov. 15. | To John Murray | 181 |


Digitized by Google

| | | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 680. | Dec. 3. | To John Murray | 183 |
| 681. | Dec. 11. | To John Hanson | 186 |
| 682. | Dec. 15. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 189 |


1818.


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 683. | Jan. 8. | To John Murray | 190 |
| 684. | Jan. 19. | ,, ,, | 193 |
| 685. | Jan. 27. | ,, ,, | 194 |
| 686. | Feb. 2. | To Thomas Moore | 195 |
| 687. | Feb. 20. | To John Murray | 199 |
| 688. | Feb. 28. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 204 |
| 689. | March 3. | To Samuel Rogers | 206 |
| 690. | March 16. | To Thomas Moore | 214 |
| 691. | March 25. | To John Murray | 216 |
| 692. | April 11. | ,, ,, | 218 |
| 693. | April 12. | ,, ,, | 222 |
| 694. | April 15. | To Charles Hanson | 225 |
| 695. | April 15. | To John Murray | 225 |
| 696. | April 17. | ,, ,, | 226 |
| 697. | April 23. | ,, ,, | 228 |
| 698. | May 31. | To Charles Hanson | 231 |
| 699. | May 31. | To James Wedderburn Webster | 233 |
| 700. | June. | To John Cam Hobhouse | 234 |
| 701. | June 1. | To Thomas Moore | 236 |
| 702. | June 10. | To Charles Hanson | 240 |
| 703. | June 16. | To John Murray | 241 |
| 704. | June 18. | ,, ,, | 242 |
| 705. | June 25. | ,, ,, | 243 |
| 706. | June 28. | ,, ,, | 244 |
| 707. | June 30. | ,, ,, | 244 |
| 708. | July 10. | ,, ,, | 245 |
| 709. | July 17. | ,, ,, | 246 |
| 710. | Aug. 3. | To the Hon. Augusta Leigh | 249 |
| 711. | Aug. 3. | To John Murray | 250 |
| 712. | Aug. 26. | ,, ,, | 251 |
| 713. | Aug. 31. | To Captain Basil Hall | 252 |
| 714. | Sept. 8. | To James Wedderburn Webster | 254 |
| 715. | Sept. 19. | To Thomas Moore | 257 |
| 716. | Sept. 24. | To John Murray | 263 |
| 717. | Sept. 30. | To John Hanson | 264 |
| 718. | Oct. 6. | ,, ,, | 265 |


Digitized by Google

| | | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 719. | Oct. 13. | To John Hanson | 266 |
| 720. | Nov. 18. | To Lady Byron | 268 |
| 721. | Nov. 18. | To D. Kinnaird and J. C. Hobhouse | 269 |
| 722. | Nov. 18. | To Colonel Wildman | 270 |
| 723. | Nov. 24. | To John Murray | 271 |

1819.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 724. | Jan. 20. | To John Murray | 275 |
| 725. | Jan. 25. | ,, ,, | 277 |
| 726. | Feb. 1. | ,, ,, | 278 |
| 727. | Feb. 22. | ,, ,, | 280 |
| 728. | March 9. | To John Hanson | 280 |
| 729. | April 3. | To John Murray | 281 |
| 730. | April 6. | ,, ,, | 282 |
| 731. | April 27. | To the Editor of *Galignani's Messenger* | 286 |
| 732. | May 6. | To John Murray | 289 |
| 733. | May 15. | ,, ,, | 295 |
| 734. | May 18. | ,, ,, | 301 |
| 735. | May 20. | ,, ,, | 304 |
| 736. | May 25. | ,, ,, | 305 |
| 737. | June 2. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 307 |
| 738. | June 6. | ,, ,, ,, | 308 |
| 739. | June 7. | To John Murray | 313 |
| 740. | June 20. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 317 |
| 741. | June 29. | To John Murray | 319 |
| 742. | July 2. | To James Wedderburn Webster | 322 |
| 743. | July 2. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 324 |
| 744. | Aug. 1. | To John Murray | 326 |
| 745. | Aug. 9. | ,, ,, | 336 |
| 746. | Aug. 12. | ,, ,, | 339 |
| 747. | Aug. 23. | ,, ,, | 346 |
| 748. | Aug. 24. | ,, ,, | 348 |
| 749. | Aug. 25. | To the Countess Guiccioli | 350 |
| 750. | Aug. 29. | To John Murray | 350 |
| 751. | Sept. 17. | ,, ,, | 353 |
| 752. | Sept. 27. | ,, ,, | 354 |
| 753. | Oct. 3. | To John Cam Hobhouse | 355 |
| 754. | Oct. 5. | To James Wedderburn Webster | 359 |
| 755. | Oct. 22. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 360 |
| 756. | Oct. 25. | ,, ,, ,, | 362 |
| 757. | Oct. 28. | ,, ,, ,, | 364 |


Digitized by Google

| | | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 758. | Oct. 29. | To John Murray | 367 |
| 759. | Oct. 29. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 370 |
| 760. | Nov. 8. | To John Murray | 373 |
| 761. | Nov. 20. | To William Bankes | 377 |
| 762. | Nov. 25. | To the Countess Guiccioli | 379 |
| 763. | Dec. 4. | To John Murray | 380 |
| 764. | Undated. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 383 |
| 765. | Dec. 10. | To John Murray | 384 |
| 766. | Dec. 23. | To the Hon. Augusta Leigh | 389 |
| 767. | Undated. | To the Countess Guiccioli | 391 |
| 768. | Dec. 31. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 392 |


1820.


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 769. | Jan. 2. | To Thomas Moore | 394 |
| 770. | Jan. 2. | To the Hon. Augusta Leigh | 397 |
| 771. | Jan. 20. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 398 |
| 772. | Jan. 31. | ,, ,, ,, | 400 |
| 773. | Feb. 7. | To John Murray | 401 |
| 774. | Feb. 19. | To William Bankes | 403 |
| 775. | Feb. 21. | To John Murray | 405 |
| 776. | Feb. 26. | To William Bankes | 411 |
| 777. | Feb. 28. | To John Murray | 412 |
| 778. | March 1. | ,, ,, | 413 |
| 779. | March 5. | ,, ,, | 416 |
| 780. | March 14. | ,, ,, | 418 |
| 781. | March 20. | ,, ,, | 419 |
| 782. | March 23. | ,, ,, | 421 |
| 783. | March 28. | ,, ,, | 425 |
| 784. | March 29. | ,, ,, | 425 |
| 785. | March 31. | To Richard Belgrave Hoppner | 427 |


Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

# CONTENTS.


| CHAPTER | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| XV. | MARIANNA SEGATI—ARMENIAN STUDIES—*MANFRED* ... ... ... ... | 1 |
| XVI. | FERRARA AND *THE LAMENT OF TASSO*—ROME—RETURN TO VENICE—*CHILDE HAROLD*, CANTO IV.—*BEPPO* ... | 112 |
| XVII. | THE FORNARINA—"ODE ON VENICE"—*MAZEPPA*—*DON JUAN*, CANTO I. ... | 190 |
| XVIII. | COUNTESS GUICCIOLI; VENICE; BOLOGNA; RAVENNA; BOLOGNA; LA MIRA—*DON JUAN*, CANTO III. ... ... ... | 289 |
| XIX. | THE PALAZZO GUICCIOLI AT RAVENNA—*MORGANTE MAGGIORE*—*THE PROPHECY OF DANTE*—*FRANCESCA OF RIMINI*—OBSERVATIONS UPON AN ARTICLE IN BLACKWOOD'S *EDINBURGH MAGAZINE* | 391 |
| APPENDIX I. | TRANSLATIONS FROM THE ARMENIAN ... ... ... | 429 |
| „ II. | COUNTESS ALBRIZZI'S CHARACTER OF BYRON ... ... ... | 437 |
| „ III. | WEDDERBURN WEBSTER'S REPLY TO THE *QUARTERLY REVIEW* | 445 |
| „ IV. | STENDHAL'S ACCOUNT OF BYRON AT VENICE ... ... ... | 450 |


Digitized by Google

| | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| APPENDIX V. | BYRON'S UNFINISHED SKIT ON SOTHEBY'S TOUR (1816–17) WITH HIS FAMILY, PROFESSOR ELMSLEY, AND DR. PLAYFAIR ... | 452 |
| „ VI. | EXTRACTS FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE POLICE ... ... ... | 454 |
| „ VII. | LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF "MY GRANDMOTHER'S REVIEW" ... | 465 |
| „ VIII. | MOORE'S VISIT TO VENICE IN OCTOBER, 1819 ... ... | 471 |
| „ IX. | REPLY TO BLACKWOOD'S *EDINBURGH MAGAZINE* ... ... | 474 |
| „ X. | THOMAS MULOCK'S *ANSWER GIVEN BY THE GOSPEL TO THE ATHEISM OF ALL AGES.* LONDON, 1819... | 496 |
| „ XI. | BYRON'S BALLAD ON HOBHOUSE | 498 |


Digitized by Google

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.


COUNTESS GUICCIOLI, FROM A DRAWING MADE IN 1839 BY COUNT D'ORSAY ... ... *Frontispiece*

BYRON'S HOUSE IN THE FREZZERIA, VENICE, FROM A DRAWING BY ANGELO ALESSANDRI, IN THE POSSESSION OF JOHN MURRAY, ESQ. *To face p.* 8

LADY BYRON, FROM AN OIL PAINTING BY JAMES RAMSAY, IN THE POSSESSION OF JAMES WARD, ESQ. ... ... ... ,, ,, 66

THE HON. AUGUSTA LEIGH, FROM A DRAWING BY T. C. WAGEMAN, IN THE POSSESSION OF E. W. HENNELL, ESQ. ... ... ,, ,, 82

PALAZZO MOCENIGO, FROM A DRAWING BY LADY EASTLAKE, IN THE POSSESSION OF LADY LAYARD ... ... ... ,, ,, 190

GIOVANNI BATTISTA FALCIERI (TITA), FROM A PORTRAIT BY D. MACLISE, R.A., IN THE POSSESSION OF CONINGSBY DISRAELI, ESQ. ,, ,, 404


Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

# LETTERS OF LORD BYRON.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE FREZZERIA, VENICE, NOVEMBER, 1816—APRIL, 1817.

MARIANNA SEGATI—ARMENIAN STUDIES—*MANFRED*.

### 613.—To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

Verona, Nov^r 6^th^ 1816.

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,—I am thus far on my way to Venice, and shall stay here a day to see the place, the paintings, the "tomb of all the Capulets"[1] which they show (at least a tomb they call so after the story, from which Shakespeare drew the plot of his play), and all the sights and so forths at which it is usual to gape in passing.

I left Milan on Sunday, and have travelled but slowly over some celebrated ground; but Lombardy is not a beautiful country—at least in autumn, excepting however the Lago di Garda and its outlines which are mountainous on one side: and it is a very fine stormy lake throughout—never quiet; and I had the pleasure

1. See *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 382, *note* 2; and p. 386, *note* 1.



Digitized by Google

of seeing it in all its vexation, foaming like a little Sea, as Virgil has described it.[1] But (thank God) you are not a blue-stocking, and I won't inflict the appropriate bit of Latin upon you.

I wrote to you a few scraps of *letterets*[2] (I may call them they were so short) from Milan.

1. See *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 381, *note* 1.

2. The following are two of the "letterets." Leave to publish them was obtained too late for their insertion in vol. iii. :—

To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

"Milan, Oct. 13th 1816.

"MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,—You see I have got to Milan. We "came by the Simplon escaping all perils of precipices and robbers, "of which last there was some talk and apprehension—a chain of "English carriages having been stopped near Cesto a few weeks "ago, and handsomely pilfered of various chattels. We were not "molested.

"The Simplon, as you know, is the most superb of all possible "routes, so I shall not describe it. I also navigated the Lago "Maggiore and went over the Borromean Islands, the latter are "fine but too artificial, the lake itself is beautiful, as indeed is the "whole country from Geneva hither, and the Alpine part most "magnificent.

"Close to Milan is the beginning of an unfinished triumphal arch "for Napoleon, so beautiful as to make one regret its non-comple- "tion. As we only reached Milan last night I can say little about "it, but will write again in a few days. The Jerseys are here. "Madᵉ de Stael is gone to Paris (or going) from Coppet. I was "more there than elsewhere during my stay at Diodati, and she "has been particularly kind and friendly towards me the whole "time.

"When you write address to *Geneva* still, Poste *restante*, and my "banker (Monsr. Hentsch) will forward your letters. I have written "to you so often lately that you will not regret the brevity of this. "I hope that you received safely my presents for the children (by "Scrope) and that you also have (by the post) a little journal of a "journey in and on the Alps which I sent you early this month, "having kept it on purpose for *you*.

"Ever yours,

"B."

To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

"Milan, Novr. 2, 1816.

"MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,—I wrote to you the other day, and I "now do so to send a few lines and to request you to take particular

Digitized by Google

Dr. Polidori, whom I parted with before I left Geneva (not for any great harm, but because he was always in squabbles, and had no kind of conduct), contrived at Milan, which he reached before me, to get into a quarrel with an Austrian,[1] and to be ordered out of the city by the government. *I did not even see his adventure*, nor had any thing to do with it, except getting him out of arrest, and trying to get him altogether out of the scrape. This I mention, because I know in England some one or other will probably transfer his adventures to me. After what has been said already, I have a right to suspect every thing and every body; so I state all this for your satisfaction, and that you may be able to contradict any such report. Mr. Hobhouse and Trevannion, and indeed every body—Italian and English—then at Milan, can corroborate this if necessary. It occurred several days before Mr. H. and myself left it. So much for this.

When we reach Venice I shall write to thee again. I had received your acknowledgement of the journal etc.

"care that Lady B. receives a letter sent in another enclosure. I "feel so miserable that I must write to her, however useless.

"In a day or two we set off for Venice. I have seen a good deal "of Milanese society, but nothing to make me forget others, or "forgive myself.

"Dr. Polidori (whom I dismissed some time before I left Geneva, "as I had no use for him and his temper and habits were not good) "had been in Milan some time before; but, getting into a scrape "and quarrel with some Austrians, has been sent by the Govern- "ment out of the territory.

"*I* had nothing to do with his squabble, and was not even present, "though when he sent for me I tried, of course, to get him out of "it, as well as Mr. Hobhouse, who tried also for him, but to no "purpose. I tell you all this because in England, by some kind "mistake his squabbles may be set down to *me*, and now (if this "should be the case) you have it in your power to contradict it. It "happened about a week ago.

"I shall probably write to you on my road to Venice from Verona "or elsewhere.

"B."

1. See *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 379, and Appendix VIII.

Digitized by Google

and the trinkets[1] by Scrope, of which I delight to hear the reception.

In health I am pretty well, except that the confounded Lombardy rains of this season (the autumn) have given me a flying rheumatism, which is troublesome at times, and makes me feel ancient. I am also growing *grey* and *giddy*, and cannot help thinking my head will decay; I wish my memory would, at least my remembrance.

Ada—by the way *Ada's* name (which I found in our pedigree under King John's reign) is the same with that of the Sister of Charlemagne, as I read the other day in a book treating of the Rhine.

Ever,

B.

P.S.—I forgot to tell you that my dog (Mutz by name and Swiss by nation) shuts a door when he is told: there—that's more than Tip can do.

Remember me to the child*r*, and to Georgiana, who I suppose has grown a prodigious penwoman. I hope she likes her seals and all her share of Mont Blanc.

I have had so much of mountains that I am not yet reconciled to the plains—but they improve. Verona seems a fine city.

P.S.—Nov$^{r}$ 7$^{th}$ I have been over Verona. The Amphitheatre is superb, and in high preservation. Of the *truth* of the story of Juliet they seem very tenacious, giving the date (1303), and shewing a tomb. It is an open granite sarcophagus in a most desolate convent garden, which looks quite wild and withered, and once was a Cimetery (*sic*) since ruined. I brought away four

1. The trinkets were presents for his nieces and for his daughter sent from Switzerland by Byron to Mrs. Leigh, through Scrope Davies.

Digitized by Google

small pieces of it for you and the babes (at least the female part of them), and for Ada, and her mother, if she will accept it from you. I thought the situation more appropriate to the history than if it had been less blighted. This struck me more than all the antiquities, more even than the Amphitheatre.

## 614.—To John Hanson.

Venice, Nov$^{r}$ 11$^{th}$ 1816.

My dear Sir,—Information having reached me of an intention of Lady Byron to go upon the Continent, I wrote to my Sister to object to the *Child's* leaving England. To this the answer has been that "Lady B. "did not mean to quit England *this winter*," but not a word of reply on the subject of the *Child*.[1]

1. The following are the answers received by Hanson from Sir Ralph Noel and Lady Byron on the subject:—

1.—To John Hanson.

"Kirkby Mallory, Dec. 4$^{th}$ 1816.

"Dear Sir,—In reply to the enquiry I have received from you, "I have only to state that Lady Byron has not entertained any "intention of going abroad at present. Miss Byron is perfectly "well. I am, dear sir,

"Your obedient servant,
"Ra: Noel."

2.—To John Hanson.

"Kirkby Mallory, Jan$^{y}$ 22$^{nd}$ 1817.

"Dear Sir,—I conceive my reply to your last letter perfectly "conclusive as far as the immediate enquiry was concerned. I "believe I stated that Lady Byron, under whose care Miss Byron "is, had no present intention whatever of going abroad. This "statement I am authorized to repeat, and, in my opinion, future "and probably remote contingencies cannot with propriety be "anticipated. I therefore consider it unnecessary to treat the "matter of your communication in any other light.

"Lady Byron desires her compliments, and I am, dear sir,

"Your faithful servant,
"Ra: Noel."

Digitized by Google

*My daughter* shall *not* leave England with my consent. I protest against it for every reason, and in every possible form; and I beg and desire that you will immediately take the proper steps (*legal* if necessary) to prevent the possibility of such an occurrence.

If Lady B. thinks proper now, or hereafter, to travel, that is no business of mine; but my daughter and only legitimate child must not be of the party. I do not wish to take her from the family; let her in such a case remain with Lady Noel, or my sister (or *I* will return immediately, if necessary, to receive her), but let it be *immediately settled and understood that in no case is my daughter to leave the country.*

Pray let me have an answer as soon as you conveniently can on this anxious subject, and do not delay ascertaining and arranging this point a moment, as it is to me of much consequence. In the present state of the Continent, I would not have my child rambling over it for millions. Address to me here, viz. *Venice*, Italy, *Poste Restante.*

Yours ever truly,

BYRON.

P.S.—If necessary I could come to England *now*, but wish to defer my return till *Spring*, unless absolutely necessary.

3.—To John Hanson.

"Kirkby Mallory, Jan? 30, 1817.

"There never has existed nor does there exist the remotest intention of removing Miss Byron out of the kingdom.

"ANNE ISABELLA BYRON.

"RALPH NOEL."

Under the signature of Sir Ralph Noel, he has added the words, "without the leave of the chancellor." This was the first intimation, given either to Byron or his solicitor, of the steps taken in the spring of 1816, by which Ada Byron was made a ward in Chancery.

Digitized by Google

Pray write, and do not neglect or delay on this point. I suppose, as having my power of Attorney, you can act for me: if not, let me know at all events immediately.

## 615.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, November 17, 1816.

I wrote to you from Verona the other day in my progress hither, which letter I hope you will receive. Some three years ago, or it may be more, I recollect your telling me that you had received a letter from our friend Sam, dated "On board his gondola."[1] *My* gondola is, at this present, waiting for me on the canal; but I prefer writing to you in the house, it being autumn—and rather an English autumn than otherwise. It is my intention to remain at Venice during the winter, probably, as it has always been (next to the East) the greenest island of my imagination.[2] It has not disappointed me; though its evident decay would, perhaps, have that effect upon others. But I have been familiar with ruins too long to dislike desolation. Besides, I have fallen in love, which, next to falling into the canal, (which would be of no use, as I can swim,) is the best or the worst thing I could do. I have got some extremely good apartments in the house of a "Merchant of Venice,"[3] who is

1. Byron probably alludes to a letter from Rogers to Moore, October 17, 1814, written from Venice (*Memoirs, etc., of Thomas Moore*, vol. viii. pp. 184–188), "Last night in my gondola I made a "vow I would write you a letter, if it was only to beg you would "write to me at Rome."

2. A further reason for Byron's love of Venice was suggested by Madame de Flahault (*Memoirs, etc., of Thomas Moore*, vol. iii. p. 93): "It is a curious idea of Madame Flahault, that Lord Byron chose "Venice for a residence, because, as nobody walks there, his not "having the power is not so remarkable."

3. The husband of Marianna Segati was a draper in the Frezzeria. The sign of his shop was *Il Cerno*, to which his apprentices added

Digitized by Google

a good deal occupied with business, and has a wife in her twenty-second year. Marianna (that is her name) is in her appearance altogether like an antelope. She has the large, black, oriental eyes, with that peculiar expression in them which is seen rarely among *Europeans*—even the Italians—and which many of the Turkish women give themselves by tinging the eyelid,[1]—an art not known out of that country, I believe. This expression she has *naturally*,—and something more than this. In short, I cannot describe the effect of this kind of eye,—at least upon me. Her features are regular, and rather aquiline—mouth small—skin clear and soft, with a kind of hectic colour—forehead remarkably good: her hair is of the dark gloss, curl, and colour of Lady J[ersey]'s: her figure is light and pretty, and she is a famous song-stress—scientifically so; her natural voice (in conversation, I mean) is very sweet; and the naïveté of the Venetian dialect is always pleasing in the mouth of a woman.

November 23.

You will perceive that my description, which was proceeding with the minuteness of a passport, has been interrupted for several days. In the mean time * * * *

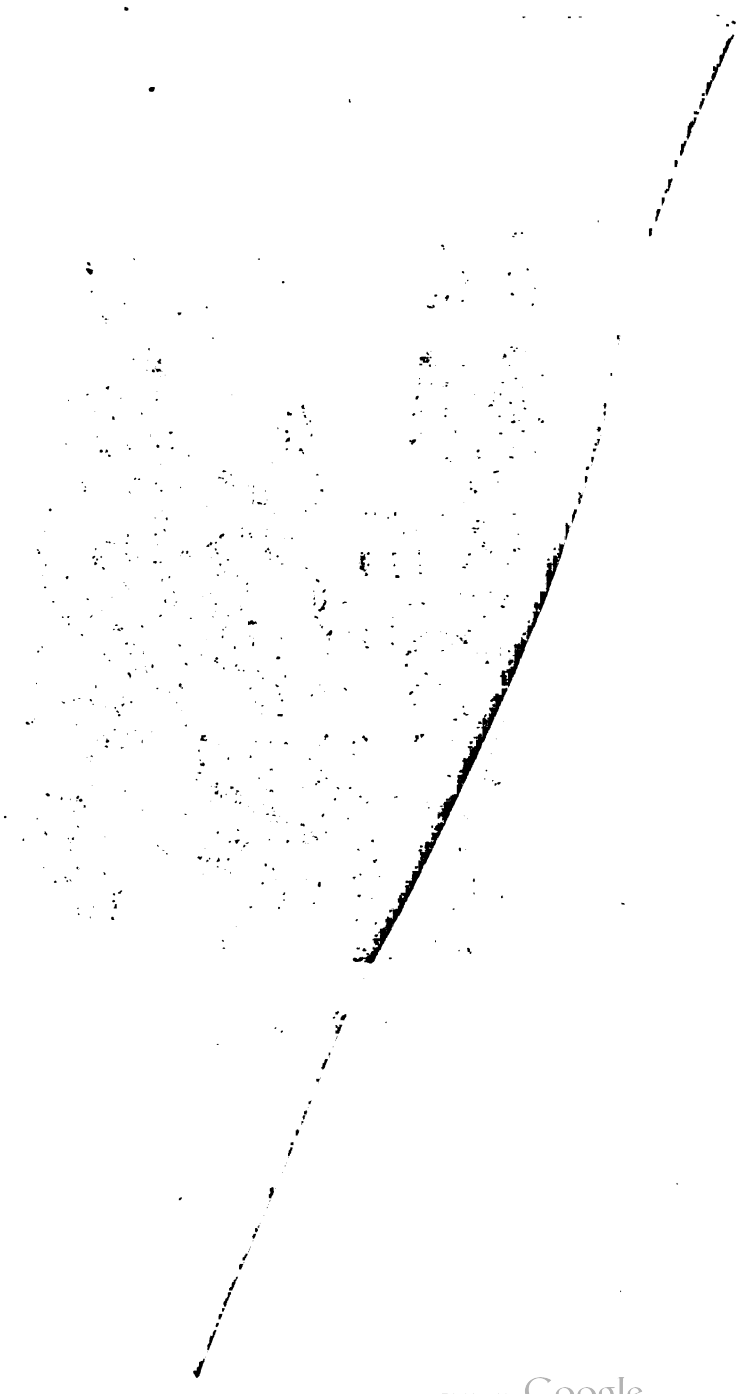
December 5.

Since my former dates, I do not know that I have much to add on the subject, and, luckily, nothing to take

the word *Inglese*. "His house," writes Rawdon Brown, in a manuscript note to Moore's *Life*, "stood on the left-hand side, going "from the *Ascensione* to the *Caffè dei Lazzaroni*. . . . Marianna," he continues, "was a demon of avarice and libidinousness, who "intrigued with every resident in the house, and every guest who "visited it."

1. "Her eyelashes, though dark as night, were tinged
(It is the country's custom), but in vain;
For those large black eyes were so blackly fringed,
The glossy rebels mock'd the jetty stain."
*Don Juan*, Canto III. stanza lxxv.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

*The Frezzeria, Venice.*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

away; for I am more pleased than ever with my Venetian, and begin to feel very serious on that point—so much so, that I shall be silent. * * * * *

By way of divertisement, I am studying daily, at an Armenian monastery,[1] the Armenian language. I found

1. The Armenian Mekhitarist Convent, on the island of St. Lazzaro, two miles to the south-east of Venice, was founded by Peter Mekhitar (1676–1749), about 1717, and completed in 1740. When Byron visited it, Aconce was Abbot (1800–24). He was succeeded by Abbot Sakias (1824–46). In Bentley's *Miscellany*, 1839 (vol. v. p. 257, *et seqq.*), is an article on "The Armenians in "Venice," by the author of *A Parisian Sabbath*. Pasquale Aucher took the writer over the convent, and showed him the spot in the garden where Byron meditated on *Manfred*, the desk at which he studied Armenian, the book in which he entered his name for the first time as a visitor—November 27, 1816. George Eric Mackay (*Lord Byron at the Armenian Convent*, Venice, 1876) says (p. 24) that Byron, on his first visit, stayed in the convent till nightfall, and that two rooms were placed at his disposal, one for sleep and one for work. He also gives an account of a friar, blind from age, who remembered seeing Byron, and said he was "handsome as a saint."

Byron, unable to offer Father Aucher money for his lessons, helped him, by way of payment, to publish his *Grammar, English and Armenian* (1817), intended to teach Armenians the English tongue. In 1819 Father Aucher published his *Grammar, Armenian and English*, "in order," as he says in his preface, "to facilitate the "progress of the English learner." In this last work, Aucher prints Byron's translation of the Corinthian Epistles, with the Armenian text (see Appendix I.). In 1821–25 Aucher, with the assistance of John Brand, published a *Dictionary* (vol. i. English and Armenian; vol. ii. Armenian and English). All these works were printed at Venice, at the press of the Armenian Academy of St. Lazarus.

At the Armenian Monastery are preserved a few notes, in Byron's handwriting, on the pages of Aucher's *English and Armenian Grammar*, and his signature in the visitor's book in Armenian and English characters. The Fourth Canto of *Childe Harold* was translated into Armenian by one of the monks, and published at Venice in 1860. Byron, in his *Detached Thoughts* (1821), thus refers to his study of Armenian—

"I sometimes wish that I had studied languages with more "attention. Those which I know, even the classical (Greek and "Latin in the usual proportion of a sixth-form boy), and a smatter-"ing of modern Greek, the Armenian and Arabic alphabets, a "few Turkish or Albanian phrases, oaths, or requests,—Italian "tolerably,—Spanish less than tolerably,—French to read with "ease but speak with difficulty or rather not at all,—all have been "acquired by ear or eye, and never by anything like study. Like

Digitized by Google

that my mind wanted something craggy to break upon;[1] and this—as the most difficult thing I could discover here for an amusement—I have chosen, to torture me into attention. It is a rich language, however, and would amply repay any one the trouble of learning it. I try, and shall go on;—but I answer for nothing, least of all for my intentions or my success. There are some very curious MSS. in the monastery, as well as books; translations also from Greek originals, now lost, and from Persian and Syriac, etc.; besides works of their own people. Four years ago the French instituted an Armenian professorship. Twenty pupils presented themselves on Monday morning, full of noble ardour, ingenuous youth, and impregnable industry. They persevered, with a courage worthy of the nation and of universal conquest, till Thursday; when *fifteen* of the *twenty* succumbed to the six-and-twentieth letter of the alphabet. It is, to be sure, a Waterloo of an Alphabet[2]—that must be said for

"'Edie Ochiltree,' I never 'dowed to bide a hard turn o' wark in "my life.' To be sure, I set in zealously for the Armenian and "Arabic; but I fell in love with some absurd womankind both times "before I had overcome the characters, and at Malta and Venice "left the profitable for—for—(no matter what), notwithstanding "that my master, the Padre Pasquale Aucher (for whom, by the "way, I compiled the major part of two Armenian and English "grammars) assured me that 'the terrestrial Paradise was to be "found in *Armenia*.' I went seeking it—God knows where. Did "I find it? Umph! Now and then—for a minute or two."

1. Byron has in mind the advice given (Sept. 7, 1776) by Frederick II., King of Prussia, to Jean-le-Rond d'Alembert, who was lamenting the death (May, 1776) of Mlle. l'Espinasse. The king prescribed as a remedy for his friend's grief, *quelque problème bien difficile à résoudre*. Byron, as it were, paraphrases the motto which he prefixed to *Childe Harold*, Canto III., "Afin que cette application vous "forçât à penser à autre chose. Il n'y a en vérité de remède que "celui-là et le temps."—*Lettres du Roi de Prusse et de M. d'Alembert* [*Œuvres du Frédéric II., Roi de Prusse*, 1790, tom. xiv. pp. 64, 65].

2. "The Armenians write and read from the left to the right, "and there are 38 letters contained in their Alphabet. . . . The "Armenian characters are divided into two classes, and are written "in 4 different hands" (Johnson's *Typographia*, vol. ii. pp. 408, 409).

Digitized by Google

them. But it is so like these fellows, to do by it as they did by their sovereigns—abandon both; to parody the old rhymes, "Take a thing and give a thing"—"Take a "king and give a king." They are the worst of animals, except their conquerors.

I hear that Hodgson is your neighbour, having a living in Derbyshire.[1] You will find him an excellent-hearted fellow, as well as one of the cleverest; a little, perhaps, too much japanned by preferment in the church and the tuition of youth, as well as inoculated with the disease of domestic felicity, besides being over-run with fine feelings about woman and *constancy* (that small change of Love, which people exact so rigidly, receive in such counterfeit coin, and repay in baser metal); but, otherwise, a very worthy man, who has lately got a pretty wife, and (I suppose) a child by this time. Pray remember me to him, and say that I know not which to envy most his neighbourhood—him, or you.

Of Venice I shall say little. You must have seen many descriptions; and they are most of them like. It is a poetical place; and classical, to us, from Shakespeare and Otway.[2] I have not yet sinned against it in verse, nor do I know that I shall do so, having been tuneless since I crossed the Alps, and feeling, as yet, no renewal of the *estro*. By the way, I suppose you have seen *Glenarvon*.[3] Madame de Stael lent it me to read from

An Armenian-French Dictionary, by Pasquale Aucher, was published at Venice (two vols. 8vo) in 1812–17.

1. Francis Hodgson was appointed, July 18, 1816, to the living of Bakewell, in Derbyshire (*Memoirs of the Rev. F. Hodgson*, vol. ii. p. 65).

2. "I confess," writes Henry Matthews (*Diary of an Invalid*, ed. 1835, p. 257), "that I thought more of Shakespeare and "Otway, Othello and Shylock, Pierre and Jaffier, than of Dandolo "and all his victories." The reference is to Otway's *Venice Preserved* (1682).

3. For *Glenarvon*, see *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 137, *note*, and vol. iii.

Digitized by Google

Copet last autumn. It seems to me, that if the authoress had written the *truth*, and nothing but the truth—the whole truth—the romance would not only have been more *romantic*, but more entertaining. As for the likeness, the picture can't be good—I did not sit long enough. When you have leisure, let me hear from and of you, believing me,

Ever and truly yours most affectionately,

B.

P.S.—Oh! *your poem*—is it out? I hope Longman has paid his thousands; but don't you do as H—— T——'s father[1] did, who, having made money by a

p. 338, *note* 2. Mrs. Leigh, in a letter to Hodgson, June 10, 1816, says—

"I suppose you have heard of Lady C. L.'s extraordinary pro-"duction,—*Glenarvon*, a novel. The hero and heroine you may "guess; the former painted in the most atrocious colours. If you "have not, pray read it. You foretold mischief in that quarter, and "much has occurred, if only that I hear this *horrid* book is supposed "and believed a true delineation of his character, and the letters "true copies of originals, etc., etc., etc.! I can't think of her with "*christian charity*, so I won't dwell upon the subject. But *pray* "read it. I had a letter from Lady B. the other day. She is at "Kirkby, and I fear her health is very indifferent. The Bulletins "of the poor child's health by B.'s desire pass thro' me, and I'm "very sorry for it, and that I ever had any concern in this most "wretched business. I can't however explain all my reasons at this "distance, and must console myself by the consciousness of having "done my duty, and to the best of my judgement all I could for the "happiness of both. Have you by chance, dear Mr. H., some "letters I wrote you in answer to some of yours, and in favour of "Lady B. and her family? If you have, may I request you not yet "to destroy them, and to tell me fairly when next you write, if you "ever heard me say one word that could detract from *her* merits, or "make you think me partial to *his* side of the question. Whatever "ideas these questions may suggest, at present keep them to yourself."

1. Richard Twiss (1747–1821) was the *uncle* of Horace Twiss, whose father, Francis Twiss, compiled a *Complete Verbal Index to the Plays of Shakespeare* (1805–7). Richard Twiss published his *Travels through Portugal and Spain* in 1775. In Boswell's *Life of Dr. Johnson* (April 7, 1775), a remark of Johnson's is quoted: "I "have been reading Twiss's *Travels in Spain*, which are just come "out. They are as good as the first book of travels that you will

Digitized by Google

quarto tour, became a vinegar merchant; when, lo! his vinegar turned sweet (and be damned to it) and ruined him. My last letter to you (from Verona) was enclosed to Murray—have you got it? Direct to me *here, poste restante*. There are no English here at present. There were several in Switzerland—some women; but, except Lady Dalrymple Hamilton,[1] most of them as ugly as virtue—at least, those I saw.

## 616.—To John Murray.

Venice, November 25, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—It is some months since I have heard from or of you—I think, not since I left Diodati. From Milan I wrote once or twice; but have been here some little time, and intend to pass the winter without removing. I was much pleased with the Lago di Garda, and with Verona, particularly the amphitheatre, and a sarcophagus in a Convent garden, which they show as Juliet's: they insist on the *truth* of her history. Since my arrival at Venice, the lady of the Austrian governor[2] told me that between Verona and Vicenza there are still ruins of the castle of the *Montecchi*, and a chapel once appertaining to the Capulets. Romeo seems to have been of *Vicenza* by the tradition; but I was a good deal surprised to find so firm a faith in Bandello's novel, which seems really to have been founded on a fact.[3]

"take up. They are as good as those of Keysler or Blainville; "nay, as Addison's, if you except the learning." According to the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1821 (vol. i. p. 284), Richard Twiss "ruined an ample hereditary fortune" by a "speculation of making "paper from straw."

1. Jane, eldest daughter of Adam, first Viscount Duncan, married, May 19, 1800, Sir Hew Dalrymple Hamilton, Bart. (1774–1834).

2. Countess Goetz. Probably the ruined castle at Montecchio, between Vicenza and Recoaro, is referred to.

3. See *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 386, *note* 1.

Digitized by Google

Venice pleases me as much as I expected, and I expected much. It is one of those places which I know before I see them, and has always haunted me the most after the East. I like the gloomy gaiety of their gondolas, and the silence of their canals. I do not even dislike the evident decay of the city, though I regret the singularity of its vanished costume; however, there is much left still; the Carnival, too, is coming.

St. Mark's, and indeed Venice, is most alive at night. The theatres are not open till *nine*, and the society is proportionably late. All this is to my taste; but most of your countrymen miss and regret the rattle of hackney coaches, without which they can't sleep.

I have got remarkably good apartments in a private house: I see something of the inhabitants (having had a good many letters to some of them); I have got my gondola; I read a little, and luckily could speak Italian (more fluently though than accurately) long ago. I am studying, out of curiosity, the *Venetian* dialect, which is very naïve, and soft, and peculiar, though not at all classical; I go out frequently, and am in very good contentment.

The *Helen* of Canova (a bust which is in the house of Madame the Countess d'Albrizzi,[1] whom I know) is,

1. Isabella Teotochi, Countess Albrizzi (? 1761–1836), was a native of Corfu, where her father, Antonio Teotochi, was the head of an ancient Greek family. She married, April 10, 1776, Carlo Antonio, a Venetian nobleman, and, settling in Venice, opened her *salon*, which became famous among men of letters. In 1778 her eldest son, Giambattista Marin, was born. From her first husband she was divorced by proceedings which ended at Padua in July, 1795. Nine months later, March 28, 1796, she married Giuseppe Albrizzi, by whom she had a son, Giuseppino Albrizzi, born in 1800. The most distinguished men of the day were her friends (see *Alcune lettere d'illustri Italiani ad Isabella Teotochi*, Firenze, 1856). Many of them are commemorated in her *Ritratti, scritti da Isabella Teotochi Albrissi*, a series of line portraits, with descriptive letter-press. Her portrait of Byron was included in the 1826 edition.

Digitized by Google

without exception, to my mind, the most perfectly beautiful of human conceptions, and far beyond my ideas of human execution.

In this beloved marble view
Above the works and thoughts of Man,
What Nature *could*, but *would not*, do,
And Beauty and Canova *can* /
Beyond Imagination's power,
Beyond the Bard's defeated art,
With Immortality her dower,
Behold the *Helen* of the *heart* /

Moore's translation of portions of it is given in Appendix II., as well as the original *Ritratto*. The work appeared at Brescia in 1807, with a dedication to her son Giuseppino, and consisted of sixteen portraits. A seventeenth portrait (Arteaga) was added in the second edition (Padua, 1808), and five others were given in the third edition (1816). In the fourth edition (Pisa, 1826), the number was increased to twenty-four, that of Byron being the twenty-third. Among the friends are Ippolito Pindemonte, Morelli, Alfieri, Ugo Foscolo, the countess's husband, and her father. Denon's portrait of the countess was seen in his rooms at Paris by Lady Morgan (*Italy*, vol. iii. p. 257). Her husband died in 1812. She herself lived till September 27, 1836. An account of her life and times is given by Malamani, in his *Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi, i suoi amici—il suo tempo, etc.* (1882), from which the above facts are mainly taken. Her work on Canova passed through three editions in Byron's lifetime, —*Opere di scultura e di plastica di A. Canova descritte da I. A.* (Firenze, 1809, 8vo; Firenze, 1809, fol.; 4 tom., Pisa, 1821–25, 8vo). In the *Works of Antonio Canova engraved in outline by Henry Moses* (London, 1876), the bust of Helen is figured (to face p. 58), and it is stated that it was executed in 1814 and presented to the Countess Albrizzi. It is also mentioned that Canova's statue of Hebe was executed in 1796 for Count Albrizzi. Byron, in a note to his *Marino Faliero* (1821), speaking of the exceptions to the "present decay and degeneracy of Venice," mentions "Giuseppe Albrizzi, the accomplished son of an accomplished "mother," and in the dedication to *Childe Harold*, Canto IV., he mentions "Albrizzi" as one of the "great names" still remaining in Italy.

Moore, in 1819 (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. iii. p. 26), went to one of the countess's assemblies. "More disenchantment; these assemblies, "which, at a distance, sounded so full of splendour and gallantry "to me, turned into something much worse than one of Lydia "White's conversaziones."

Digitized by Google

Talking of the "heart" reminds me that I have fallen in love, which, except falling into the Canal (and that would be useless as I can swim), is the best (or worst) thing I could do. I am therefore in love—fathomless love; but lest you should make some splendid mistake, and envy me the possession of some of those princesses or countesses with whose affections your English voyagers are apt to invest themselves, I beg leave to tell you, that my goddess is only the wife of a "Merchant of Venice;" but then she is pretty as an Antelope, is but two-and-twenty years old, has the large, black, Oriental eyes, with the Italian countenance, and dark glossy hair, of the curl and colour of Lady Jersey's. Then she has the voice of a lute, and the song of a Seraph (though not quite so sacred), besides a long postscript of graces, virtues, and accomplishments, enough to furnish out a new chapter for Solomon's Song. But her great merit is finding out mine—there is nothing so amiable as discernment. Our little arrangement is completed; the usual oaths having been taken, and every thing fulfilled according to the "understood relations" of such liaisons.

The general race of women appear to be handsome; but in Italy, as on almost all the Continent, the highest orders are by no means a well-looking generation, and indeed reckoned by their countrymen very much otherwise. Some are exceptions, but most of them as ugly as Virtue herself.

If you write, address to me here, *poste restante*, as I shall probably stay the winter over. I never see a newspaper, and know nothing of England, except in a letter now and then from my Sister. Of the MS. sent you I know nothing, except that you have received it, and are to publish it, etc., etc.: but when, where, and how, you leave me to guess. But it don't much matter.

Digitized by Google

I suppose you have a world of works passing through your process for next year? When does Moore's poem appear? I sent a letter for him, addressed to your care, the other day.

So Mr. Frere[1] is married; and you tell me in a former letter that he had "nearly forgotten that he was "so." He is fortunate.

Yours ever, and very truly,

B.

## 617.—To John Murray.

Venice, December 4, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—I have written to you so frequently of late, that you will think me a bore; as I think you a very impolite person for not answering my letters from Switzerland, Milan, Verona, and Venice. There are some things I wanted, and want, to know; viz. whether Mr. Davies, of inaccurate memory, had or had not delivered the MS. as delivered to him; because, if he has not, you will find that he will bountifully bestow extracts and transcriptions on all the curious of his acquaintance, in which case you may probably find your publication anticipated by the "Cambridge" or other

1. John Hookham Frere married, September 12, 1816, Elizabeth Jemima, Dowager Countess of Erroll. Murray, writing to Byron, September 12, 1816 (*Memoir of John Murray*, vol. i. p. 366), says—"*A-propos* of Mr. Frere: he came to me while at breakfast this "morning, and between some stanzas which he was repeating to me "of a truly original poem of his own, he said carelessly, 'By the way, "about *half-an-hour ago* I was so silly (taking an immense pinch of "snuff and priming his nostrils with it) as to get *married*!' Per-"fectly true! He set out for Hastings about an hour after he left "me, and upon my conscience I verily believe that, if I had had "your MS. to have put into his hands, as sure as fate he would have "sat with me reading it all the morning, and totally forgotten his "little engagement." The same story is told in tamer fashion by Sir Bartle Frere (*Works of J. H. Frere*, vol. i. pp. 161, 162).



Digitized by Google

Chronicles. In the next place,—I forget what was next; but in the 3d place, I want to hear whether you have yet published, or when you mean to do so, or why you have not done so, because in your last (Sept. 20th,—you may be ashamed of the date) you talked of this being done immediately.

From England I hear nothing, and know nothing of any thing or any body. I have but one correspondent (except Mr. Kinnaird on business now and then), and that one is a female; and her letters are so full of mysteries and miseries,—such a quantity of the trivial and conjectural, and such a dearth of any useful or even amusing information, that I know no more of your island, or city, than the Italian version of the French papers chooses to tell me, or the advertisements of Mr. Colburn tagged to the end of your *Quarterly Review* for the year *ago*. I wrote to you at some length last week; so that I have little to add, except that I have begun, and am proceeding in, a study of the Armenian language, which I acquire, as well as I can, at the Armenian convent, where I go every day to take lessons of a learned Friar, and have gained some singular and not useless information with regard to the literature and customs of that oriental people. They have an establishment here—a church and convent of ninety monks, very learned and accomplished men, some of them. They have also a press, and make great efforts for the enlightening of their nation. I find the language (which is *twin*, the *literal* and the *vulgar*) difficult, but not invincible (at least I hope not). I shall go on. I found it necessary to twist my mind round some severer study; and this, as being the hardest I could devise here, will be a file for the serpent.

I mean to remain here till the Spring, so address to

Digitized by Google

me *directly* to *Venice, poste restante.*—Mr. Hobhouse, for the present, is gone to Rome, with his brother, brother's wife, and Sister, who overtook him here: he returns in two months. I should have gone too, but I fell in love, and must stay that over. I should think that and the Armenian alphabet will last the winter. The lady has, luckily for me, been less obdurate than the language, or, between the two, I should have lost my remains of sanity. By the way, *she* is not Armenian, but a Venetian, as I believe I told you in my last. As for Italian, I am fluent enough, even in its Venetian modification, which is something like the Somersetshire version of English; and as for the more classical dialects, I had not forgot my former practice during my voyaging.

Yours, ever and truly,

B.

P.S.—Remember me to Mr. Gifford. And do not forget me to—— but I don't think I have any other friends of your acquaintance.

## 618.—To John Murray.

Venice, Dec. 9, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—In a letter from England, I am informed that a man named Johnson[1] has taken upon himself to

1. See *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 337, *note* 1. The "Pilgrimage to the "Holy Land" is a poem in two cantos, the first consisting of 512 lines, the second of 510. The following paragraphs appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* for November 30, 1816:—

"Court of Chancery, Westminster, Nov. 28th, Lord Byron's "Poems.

"Lord Byron *v.* James Johnston.

"Sir Samuel Romilly moved for an Injunction on the part of the "Noble Plaintiff, to restrain the Defendant from publishing a "spurious edition of his Works, entitled, 'Lord Byron's Pilgrimage "to the Holy Land'—'The Tempest'—'Farewell to England'—

Digitized by Google

publish some poems called a "Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, "a Tempest, and an Address to my Daughter," etc., and

"'Ode to St. Helena'—'To my Daughter on the Morning of her "Birth'—and 'To the Lily of France;' which the defendant "advertised in the Newspapers, particularly on Saturday, the 16th "instant, as follows:—

"'The Publisher of Lord Byron's "Pilgrimage to the Holy Land" "together with "The Tempest," begs leave to say, that it will be "ready for delivery on Wednesday next, price 5s. 6d., uniform "with the Noble Author's former Works. He likewise takes the "opportunity of informing the public, lest they may be misled, that "the copy-right of this Work was consigned to him exclusively by "the Noble Author himself, and for which he gave 500 guineas,— "98, Cheapside, and 353, Oxford-street.'

"The Learned Counsel then stated, that so far from this being a "true statement, that he held in his hand the affidavit of a Gentle- "man of the name of Scrope Berdmore Davies, which set forth that "the plaintiff was travelling in Italy, and in the beginning of "September he left him near Genoa, and that he intrusted him to "bring over to Mr. John Murray, bookseller, of Albemarle-street, "his two last Poems, to be published by him, and which Mr. "Murray agreed to give two thousand guineas for: and from the "conversations he had with the Noble Lord, he was confident that "the works held out by the Defendant, are not the production of "his Lordship, only so far as they may contain plagiarisms. An "application for an injunction had been made to the Vice- "Chancellor; but his Honour was of opinion, as the Noble Plaintiff "was not in the kingdom, notice of the motion ought to be served "on the defendant, to give him an opportunity of proving the "assertions of his advertisement. He would not take up the further "time of the Court, but wait to hear what would be advanced by "his Learned Friends on the other side.

"Mr. Shadwell followed on the same side, and said, it was not "the wish of his Noble Client that the defendant should be "restrained from publishing his rhymes; all he wished was, that "he should be prohibited from selling them as his, the plaintiff's, "poetry, for it was neither grammar nor poetry that he was vending.

"Mr. Leach, Counsel for the defendant, stated, that the works in "question were denied by Lord Byron to be his works. He con- "tended, therefore, that no notice of motion could oblige the "defendant to come into Court and defend it. He would be doing "injustice to his Client, if he was to say one word more.

"Sir Samuel Romilly, in reply, contended that he was obliged "to defend after notice, or that it would be incumbent on the Court "to act as if he had. There were many cases in point, that of the "celebrated Mr. Pope, where a bookseller was restrained from "publishing poetry in his name, which he had never written. Also "in the case of Dr. Paley, and in that of Lord Chesterfield's "executors, prohibiting a work which introduced a letter of his

Digitized by Google

to attribute them to me, adding that he had paid five hundred guineas for them. The answer to this is short: *I never wrote such poems, never received the sum he mentions, nor any other in the same quarter, nor* (as far as moral or mortal certainty can be sure) *ever had, directly or indirectly, the slightest communication with Johnson in my life;* not being aware that the person existed till this intelligence gave me to understand that there were such people. Nothing surprises me, or this perhaps *would*, and most things amuse me, or this probably would *not*. With regard to myself, the man has merely *lied;* that's natural; his betters have set him the example. But with regard to you, his assertion may perhaps injure you in your publications; and I desire that it may receive the most public and unqualified contradiction. I do not know that there is any punishment for a thing of this kind; and if there were, I should not feel disposed to pursue this ingenious mountebank farther than was necessary for

"Lordship's advice to his son. The defendant had undertaken to "inform the public that the works he was publishing were the works "of the plaintiff, and that he had given for them a valuable con- "sideration, when his Lordship had disposed of them to Mr. "Murray for a large sum, and authorized him to publish them. It "was not remuneration for his talents that the Noble Plaintiff "wanted—it was only that spurious and ungrammatical matter "should not go out as his production. His Learned Friend (Mr. "Leach) had made no objection that the bill could not be filed in "the absence of Lord Byron. But if he had, he could have proved, "by affidavit, that his Lordship had left authority with Mr. Murray, "before he went abroad, for that purpose, and also a general "authority. Under those considerations, he had no doubt but his "Lordship would grant the injunction to restrain the Defendant "from selling the works as those of Lord Byron.

"The Lord Chancellor observed, that the Noble Plaintiff did not "ask the injunction to restrain the defendant from publishing on "pecuniary grounds, but on the grounds of character as an author; "in answer to which the defendant had said he had given a "pecuniary compensation for the work he had published. He "(the Lord Chancellor) certainly could not refuse the injunction, "on Lord Byron giving security for the costs of the suit.

"Injunction granted."

Digitized by Google

his confutation; but thus far it may be necessary to proceed.

You will make what use you please of this letter; and Mr. Kinnaird—who has power to act for me during my absence—will, I am sure, readily join you in any steps which it may be proper to take, with regard to the absurd falsehood of this poor creature. As you will have recently received several letters from me on my way to Venice, as well as two written since my arrival, I will not at present trouble you further.

Ever very truly yours,

BYRON.

P.S.—Pray let me know that you have received *this* letter. Address to Venice, *poste restante.*

To prevent the recurrence of similar fabrications, you may state, that I consider myself responsible for no publication from the year 1812 up to the present date, which is not from your press. I speak of course from that period, because, previously, Cawthorn and Ridge had both printed compositions of mine. "A Pilgrimage to "*Jerusalem!*" How the devil should I write about *Jerusalem*, never having yet been there? As for "a "tempest," it was *not* a *tempest* when I left England, but a very fresh breeze: and as to an address to little Ada, (who, by the way, is a year old to-morrow,) I never wrote a line about her, except in "Farewell" and the 3[d] canto of *Childe H—d.*

## 619.—To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

Venice, Dec[r] 19[th] 1816.

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,—I wrote to you a few days ago. Your letter of the 1[st] is arrived, and you have "a *hope*"[1]

1. Mrs. Leigh, writing to Hodgson, October 29, 1816 (*Memoir*

Digitized by Google

for me, it seems: what "*hope*," child? my dearest Sis. I remember a methodist preacher who, on perceiving a profane grin on the faces of part of his congregation, exclaimed "no *hopes* for them as *laughs*." And thus it is with us: we laugh too much for hopes, and so even let them go. I am sick of sorrow, and must even content myself as well as I can: so here goes—I won't be woeful again if I can help it.

My letter to my moral Clytemnestra required no answer, and I would rather have none. I was wretched enough when I wrote it, and had been so for many a long day and month: at present I am less so, for reasons explained in my late letter[1] (a few days ago); and as I never pretend to be what I am not, you may tell her if you please that I am recovering, and the reason also if you like it.

I do not agree with you about Ada:[2] there was

*of Rev. F. Hodgson*, vol. ii. p. 39), says of Byron, "Sometimes I "venture to indulge a hope that what I wish most earnestly for him "may be working its way in his mind. Heaven grant it!" She probably refers to religious feeling.

1. In a letter to Hodgson, March 4, 1817, Mrs. Leigh writes of her brother—

"*From* him I have not heard for *nearly* 5 weeks, and his letter "was dated the 13th Jan*y*. *Of* him I have heard a little later "account; Mr. Murray showed me a letter to him dated y*e* 24 of "Jan*y*, and I believe Mr. Moore has heard since that. I am daily "hoping to do so, for any unusual silence puts me into a fidget. "His last letters have been *uncomfortable;* in one of them, after "giving me the history of a *new attachment*, he says, 'and tell "Hodgson his prediction is fulfilled; you know he foretold I should "fall in love with an Italian, and so I have.' I should prefer giving "you a more agreeable message, dear Mr. H., but I don't like to "withhold any of his words to *you*. As for *the circumstance* it "alludes to, it is only *one* among a million of melancholy anticipa-"tions of mine."

2. Mrs. Leigh, in a letter written to Hodgson, March 4, 1817, says of Byron—

"He has lately given himself and others much needless worry "on the subject of the poor dear little girl. I forget whether I told "you, but must risk a repetition. Somebody wrote, I believe

Digitized by Google

*equivocation* in the answer, and it shall be settled one way or the other. I wrote to Hanson to take proper steps to prevent such a removal of my daughter, and even the probability of it.

I have heard of Murray's squabble with one of his brethren, who is an impudent impostor, and should be trounced.

You do not say whether the *true po's* are out: I hope you like them.

You are right in saying that I like Venice: it is very much what you would imagine it, but I have no time just now for description. The Carnival is to begin in a week, and with it the mummery of masking.

I have not been out a great deal, but quite as much as I like. I am going out this evening in my *cloak* and *Gondola*—there are two nice Mrs. Radcliffe words for you. And then there is the place of St. Mark, and conversaziones, and various fooleries, besides many *nau:* indeed, every body is *nau*, so much so, that a lady with only *one lover* is not reckoned to have overstepped the modesty of marriage—that being a regular thing. Some have two, three, and so on to twenty, beyond which they don't account; but they generally begin by one. The husbands of course belong to any body's wives—but their own. . . . . .

The music here is famous, and there will be a whole

"merely as a piece of gossipping news, that Lady B. intended to "pass this winter abroad, which occasioned a letter addressed to me "by B. to be dispatched with all speed, insisting upon a promise "that the child should never leave England. Of course I trans- "mitted the message. The answer was, 'Lady B. had never had "any intention of quitting England.' This did not satisfy, and "several others have followed. At last, thank Heaven! the busi- "ness is transacted thro' Mr. Hanson; and Lady B. has declined "answering through me, much to my satisfaction, as I am not doing "any good in it. It appears that the child is a ward in Chancery, "which I must own I consider fortunate as things are at present."

Digitized by Google

tribe of singers and dancers during the Carnival, besides the usual theatres.

The Society here is something like our own, except that the women sit in a semicircle at one end of the room, and the men stand at the other.

I pass my mornings at the Armenian convent studying Armenian,—my evenings here and there. To-night I am going to the Countess Albrizzi's, one of the *noblesse*. I have also been at the Governor's, who is an Austrian, and whose wife, the Countess Goetz, appears to me in the little I have seen of her a very amiable and pleasing woman, with remarkably good manners, as many of the German women have.

There are no English here, except birds of passage, who stay a day and then go on to Florence or Rome.

I mean to remain here till Spring. When you write address *directly* here, as in your present letter.

Ever, dearest, yours,

B.

## 620.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, December 24, 1816.

I have taken a fit of writing to you, which portends postage—once from Verona—once from Venice, and again from Venice—*thrice* that is. For this you may thank yourself; for I heard that you complained of my silence—so, here goes for garrulity.

I trust that you received my other twain of letters. My "way of life"[1] (or "May of life," which is it according to the commentators?)—my "way of life" is fallen

1. In *Macbeth*, act v. sc. 3—

"My way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf."

Johnson reads, "My May of life."

Digitized by Google

into great regularity. In the mornings I go over in my gondola to babble Armenian with the friars of the convent of St. Lazarus, and to help one of them in correcting the English of an English and Armenian grammar which he is publishing. In the evenings I do one of many nothings—either at the theatres, or some of the conversaziones, which are like our routs, or rather worse, for the women sit in a semicircle by the lady of the mansion, and the men stand about the room. To be sure, there is one improvement upon ours—instead of lemonade with their ices, they hand about stiff *rum-punch*—*punch*, by my palate; and this they think *English*. I would not disabuse them of so agreeable an error,—"no, not for "Venice."[1]

Last night I was at the Count Governor's, which, of course, comprises the best society, and is very much like other gregarious meetings in every country,—as in ours,—except that, instead of the Bishop of Winchester,[2] you have the Patriarch of Venice, and a motley crew of Austrians, Germans, noble Venetians, foreigners, and, if you see a quiz, you may be sure he is a Consul. Oh, by the way, I forgot, when I wrote from Verona, to tell you that at Milan I met with a countryman of yours—a Colonel [Fitzgerald],[3] a very excellent, good-natured fellow, who knows and shows all about Milan, and is, as it were, a native there. He is particularly civil to strangers, and this is his history,—at least, an episode of it.

Six-and-twenty years ago, Col. [Fitzgerald], then an

1. *Merchant of Venice*, act iv. sc. 1.

2. The Hon. Brownlow North, Bishop of Winchester (1781–1820), and his fashionable wife, who took three hours to undress (Walpole's *Letters*, vol. vii. p. 62), spent many years in Italy.

3. The names, which have hitherto been omitted, are supplied from the MS. notes of Rawdon Brown, in Moore's *Life*.

Digitized by Google

ensign, being in Italy, fell in love with the Marchesa [Castiglione], and she with him. The lady must be, at least, twenty years his senior. The war broke out; he returned to England, to serve—not his country, for that's Ireland—but England, which is a different thing; and *she*—heaven knows what she did. In the year 1814, the first annunciation of the Definitive Treaty of Peace (and tyranny) was developed to the astonished Milanese by the arrival of Col. [Fitzgerald], who, flinging himself full length at the feet of Mad. [Castiglione], murmured forth, in half-forgotten Irish Italian, eternal vows of indelible constancy. The lady screamed, and exclaimed, "Who "are you?" The Colonel cried, "What! don't you know "me? I am so and so," etc., etc., etc.; till, at length, the Marchesa, mounting from reminiscence to reminiscence, through the lovers of the intermediate twenty-five years, arrived at last at the recollection of her *povero* sub-lieutenant. She then said, "Was there ever such "virtue?" (that was her very word) and, being now a widow, gave him apartments in her palace, reinstated him in all the rights of wrong, and held him up to the admiring world as a miracle of incontinent fidelity, and the unshaken Abdiel of absence.

Methinks this is as pretty a moral tale as any of Marmontel's.[1] Here is another. The same lady, several years ago, made an escapade with a Swede, Count Fersen [2]

1. Jean François Marmontel (1723–1799) was editor of the official journal, *Le Mercure*, in the pages of which he began to publish his *Contes Moraux* (1761). "En 1758," says S^te^ Beuve (*Causeries du Lundi*, vol. iv. p. 530), "il obtint le privilége du *Mercure de France*, "et il quitta Versailles et la place de secrétaire des Bâtiments pour "rentrer à Paris. Logé chez M^dme^ Geoffrin, il était de tous les "diners d'artistes, de tous ceux des gens de lettres, et même des "petits soupers mystérieux où, assis entre la belle Comtesse de "Brionne, la belle Marquise de Duras, et la jolie Comtesse d'Egmont, "il lisait ses *Contes moraux*."

2. Axel, Count Fersen (1750–1810), commanded the royal

Digitized by Google

(the same whom the Stockholm mob quartered and lapidated not very long since), and they arrived at an Osteria on the road to Rome or thereabouts. It was a summer evening, and, while they were at supper, they were suddenly regaled by a symphony of fiddles in an adjacent apartment, so prettily played, that, wishing to hear them more distinctly, the Count rose, and going into the musical society, said, "Gentlemen, I am sure "that, as a company of gallant cavaliers, you will be "delighted to show your skill to a lady, who feels anxious," etc., etc. The men of harmony were all acquiescence—every instrument was tuned and toned, and, striking up one of their most ambrosial airs, the whole band followed the Count to the lady's apartment. At their head was the first fiddler, who, bowing and fiddling at the same moment, headed his troop and advanced up the room. Death and discord!—it was the Marquis himself, who was on a serenading party in the country, while his spouse had run away from town. The rest may be imagined—but, first of all, the lady tried to persuade him that she was there on purpose to meet him, and had chosen this method for an harmonic surprise. So much for this gossip, which amused me when I heard it, and I send it to you in the hope it may have the like effect. Now we'll return to Venice.

The day after to-morrow (to-morrow being Christmas-day) the Carnival begins. I dine with the Countess Albrizzi and a party, and go to the opera. On that day

regiment called *Suédois-Royal* in France. There he was fascinated by Marie Antoinette (Klinckowström, *Le Comte de Fersen et la Cour de France*), and, after the outbreak of the Revolution, endeavoured to save her and Louis XVI. He drove the royal carriage in the flight to Varennes, June, 1791. Returning to Sweden, he was suspected of poisoning the prince-royal, and was killed by the mob at Stockholm. His career forms in part the subject of *The King with Two Faces*, by M. E. Coleridge (1897).

Digitized by Google

the Phenix, (not the Insurance Office, but) the theatre of that name, opens: I have got me a box there for the season, for two reasons, one of which is, that the music is remarkably good. The Contessa Albrizzi, of whom I have made mention, is the De Stael of Venice; not young, but a very learned, unaffected, good-natured woman; very polite to strangers, and, I believe, not at all dissolute, as most of the women are. She has written very well on the works of Canova, and also a volume of Characters, besides other printed matter. She is of Corfu, but married a dead Venetian—that is, dead since he married.

My flame (my *Donna* whom I spoke of in my former epistle, my Marianna) is still my Marianna, and I her—what she pleases. She is by far the prettiest woman I have seen here, and the most loveable I have met with any where—as well as one of the most singular. I believe I told you the rise and progress of our *liaison* in my former letter. Lest that should not have reached you, I will merely repeat, that she is a Venetian, two-and-twenty years old, married to a merchant well to do in the world, and that she has great black oriental eyes, and all the qualities which her eyes promise. Whether being in love with her has steeled me or not, I do not know; but I have not seen many other women who seem pretty. The nobility, in particular, are a sad-looking race—the gentry rather better. And now, what art *thou* doing?

What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
Sighing or suing now,
Rhyming or wooing now,
Billing or cooing now,
Which, Thomas Moore?

Digitized by Google

Are you not near the Luddites[1]? By the Lord! if there's a row, but I'll be among ye! How go on the weavers—the breakers of frames—the Lutherans of politics—the reformers?

As the Liberty lads o'er the sea
Bought their freedom, and cheaply, with blood,
So we, boys, we
Will *die* fighting, or *live* free,
And down with all kings but King Ludd!

When the web that we weave is complete,
And the shuttle exchanged for the sword,
We will fling the winding-sheet
O'er the despot at our feet,
And dye it deep in the gore he has pour'd.

Though black as his heart its hue,
Since his veins are corrupted to mud,
Yet this is the dew
Which the tree shall renew
Of Liberty, planted by Ludd!

There's an amiable *chanson* for you—all impromptu. I have written it principally to shock your neighbour * * [Hodgson?], who is all clergy and loyalty—mirth and innocence—milk and water.

But the Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore,
The Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore;

1. See *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 97, *note* 1.

Digitized by Google

Masking and humming,
Fifing and drumming,
Guitarring and strumming,
Oh Thomas Moore.

The other night I saw a new play,—and the author. The subject was the sacrifice of Isaac. The play succeeded, and they called for the author—according to continental custom—and he presented himself, a noble Venetian, Mali—or Malapiero, by name. Mala was his name, and *pessima* his production,—at least, I thought so; and I ought to know, having read more or less of five hundred Drury Lane offerings, during my coadjutorship with the sub-and-super Committee.

When does your poem of poems come out? I hear that the *Edinburgh Review* has cut up Coleridge's *Christabel*, and declared against me for praising it.[1] I praised it, firstly, because I thought well of it; secondly, because Coleridge was in great distress, and after doing what little I could for him in essentials, I thought that the public avowal of my good opinion might help him further,

1. "Lord Byron, it seems, has somewhere praised *Christabel*, as "'a wild and singularly original and beautiful poem.' Great as the "noble bard's merits undoubtedly are in poetry, some of his latest "*publications* dispose us to distrust his authority, where the question "is what ought to meet the public eye; and the works before us "afford an additional proof, that his judgment on such matters is "not absolutely to be relied on."—*Edin. Rev.*, vol. xxvii. p. 58.

"I have been much taken to task," said Byron to Medwin (*Conversations*, pp. 261–263), "for calling *Christabel* a wild and "singularly original and beautiful poem; and the Reviewers very "sagely come to a conclusion therefrom, that I am no judge of the "compositions of others. *Christabel* was the origin of all Scott's "metrical tales, and that is no small merit. . . . Some eight or "ten lines of *Christabel* found themselves in *The Siege of Corinth*, "I hardly know how; but I adopted another passage, of greater "beauty, as a motto to a little work I need not name ['Fare thee "Well!'] and paraphrased without scruple the same idea in *Childe "Harold*" (Canto III. stanza xciv.). (See also *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 228, *note* 1.)

Digitized by Google

at least with the booksellers. I am very sorry that Jeffrey has attacked him, because, poor fellow, it will hurt him in mind and pocket. As for me, he's welcome —I shall never think less of Jeffrey for any thing he may say against me or mine in future.

I suppose Murray has sent you, or will send (for I do not know whether they are out or no) the poem, or poesies, of mine, of last summer. By the mass! they are sublime—*Ganion Coheriza*[1]—gainsay who dares! Pray, let me hear from you, and of you, and, at least, let me know that you have received these three letters. Direct right *here, poste restante.*

Ever and ever, etc.

P.S.—I heard the other day of a pretty trick of a bookseller,[2] who has published some damned nonsense, swearing the bastards to me, and saying he gave me five hundred guineas for them. He lies—I never wrote such stuff, never saw the poems, nor the publisher of them, in my life, nor had any communication, directly or indirectly, with the fellow. Pray say as much for me, if need be. I have written to Murray, to make him contradict the impostor.

1. The motto borne below the arms of the Macdonalds, chiefs of Clanranald, is written *Dhandeon co heirogha.* Byron gives the meaning of the Gaelic words correctly, "Gainsay who dares." His spelling is phonetic, and nearly represents the sound. The Gaelic *dh* is sounded as a guttural (*gh*) before broad vowels, and *d* is very lightly pronounced. Thus *Dhandeon* or *Dh'andeoin* is very nearly *Ghan-jion.* The Gaelic *j* is either pronounced as *h* or omitted altogether. But probably Byron quotes from *Waverley* (chap. xliv.), "the proud "gathering word of Clanronald, *Ganion Coheriga*—(Gainsay who "dares)."

2. *Lord Byron's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, etc.*, see p. 19, *note* 1. "Of this publication," says the *Gentleman's Magazine* (December, 1816, Part II. p. 524), "it may be sufficient to say that, "had it been published either without the name of any Author, or "with a real name, it might claim some merit. But it is *not* Lord "Byron's; and the Lord Chancellor has already REVIEWED it."

Digitized by Google

## 621.—To John Hanson.

Venice, Dec^r 26^th^ 1816.

MY DEAR SIR,—The Baronet's letter is *equivocal.* "*At present.*"[1] I require an explicit answer with regard to the child, and am more inclined to credit what they prove than what they say.

It is nothing to me what Lady Byron's intentions are with regard to herself; but I desire a declaration and an assurance that my daughter shall not be taken out of the country; if this is refused, pray take all proper and legal measures without delay to prevent such a step. Why, the intention is manifest in his very answer: in case of the mother's leaving England they *would* try to take the Child. At all events the question must be settled one way or the other. He gives no answer whatever with regard to the child, which I again require and demand, or I once more desire that you will take the legal steps in my behalf proper to put the point at rest. I shall have no comfort till I know this. It would be too late to wait for her being in readiness to set off: the infant might be over the Channel before you could prevent it.

I am glad to hear that Claughton has got [Haford?], but I wish something could be done about Newstead. I approve very much of poor Joe being put in good plight.

Pray make my regards to your family, of whose welfare I rejoice to hear, and

Believe me, ever and very truly yours,

BYRON.

P.S.—Address as before, Venice—*Poste restante.*

1. See p. 5, *note* 1.



Digitized by Google

## 622.—To John Murray.

Venice, Dec. 27, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—As the Demon of silence seems to have possessed you, I am determined to have my revenge in postage. This is my sixth or seventh letter since summer and Switzerland. My last was an injunction to contradict and consign to confusion that Cheapside impostor, who (I heard by a letter from your Island) had thought proper to append my name to his spurious poesy, of which I know nothing, nor of his pretended purchase or copyright. I hope you have, at least, received *that* letter.

As the news of Venice must be very interesting to you, I will regale you with it.

Yesterday being the feast of St. Stephen, every mouth was put in motion. There was nothing but fiddling and playing on the virginals, and all kinds of conceits and divertisements, on every canal of this aquatic city. I dined with the Countess Albrizzi and a Paduan and Venetian party, and afterwards went to the opera, at the Fenice theatre (which opens for the Carnival on that day),—the finest, by the way, I have ever seen; it beats *our* theatres hollow in beauty and scenery, and those of Milan and Brescia bow before it. The opera and its Syrens were much like all other operas and women, but the subject of the said opera was something edifying; it turned—the plot and conduct thereof—upon a fact narrated by Livy [1] of a hundred and fifty married ladies

1. Byron alludes to Livy, bk. viii. c. 18. A number of leading citizens were attacked and died by a mysterious disease. In each case the symptoms were identical. At last a girl offered to reveal the cause of the disease to Fabius Maximus, the Curule Ædile. Fabius put the matter into the hands of the Consuls, who laid it before the Senate. That body unanimously agreed to hold the girl harmless if she told the truth. Thus encouraged, she disclosed a conspiracy on the part of the *Matronæ*. Acting on the girl's

Digitized by Google

having *poisoned* a hundred and fifty husbands in the good old times. The bachelors of Rome believed this extraordinary mortality to be merely the common effect of matrimony or a pestilence; but the surviving Benedicts, being all seized with the cholic, examined into the matter, and found that "their possets had been drugged;" [1] the consequence of which was much scandal and several suits at law. This is really and truly the subject of the Musical piece at the Fenice; and you can't conceive what pretty things are sung and recitativoed about the *horrenda strage*. The conclusion was a lady's head about to be chopped off by a Lictor, but (I am sorry to say) he left it on, and she got up and sung a trio with the two Consuls, the Senate in the back-ground being chorus. The ballet was distinguished by nothing remarkable, except that the principal she-dancer went into convulsions because she was not applauded on her first appearance; and the manager came forward to ask if there was "ever "a physician in the theatre." There was a Greek one in my box, whom I wished very much to volunteer his services, being sure that in this case these would have been the last convulsions which would have troubled the *Ballerina;* but he would not. The crowd was enormous; and in coming out, having a lady under my arm, I was obliged, in making way, almost to "beat a Venetian and "traduce the state," [2] being compelled to regale a person

information, they found a number of matrons in the act of brewing potions. Two of them, Cornelia and Sergia, both of patrician rank, declared that the potions were harmless. Being ordered to drink them, they consulted with the rest who had been arrested, and all turned informers. A large number of matrons were denounced, of whom 170 were found guilty.

1. *Macbeth*, act ii. sc. 2.

2. "And say, besides, that in Aleppo once
Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
Beat a Venetian and traduced the State. . . ."
*Othello*, act v. sc. 2.

Digitized by Google

with an English punch in the guts, which sent him as far back as the squeeze and the passage would admit. He did not ask for another; but, with great signs of disapprobation and dismay, appealed to his compatriots, who laughed at him.

I am going on with my Armenian studies in a morning, and assisting and stimulating in the English portion of an English and Armenian grammar, now publishing at the convent of St. Lazarus.

The Superior of the Friars is a bishop, and a fine old fellow, with the beard of a meteor. My spiritual preceptor, pastor and master, Father Paschal,[1] is also a learned and pious soul: he was two years in England.

I am still dreadfully in love with the Adriatic lady whom I spoke of in a former letter (and *not* in *this*—I add, for fear of mistakes; for the only one mentioned in the first part of this epistle is elderly and bookish, two things which I have ceased to admire), and love in this part of the world is no sinecure. This is also the season when every body make up their intrigues for the ensuing year, and cut for partners for the next deal.

And now, if you don't write, I don't know what I won't say or do, nor what I will: send me some news—good news.

Yours very truly, etc., etc., etc.

B.

1. Pasquale Aucher is described by Lady Morgan (*Italy*, vol. iii. p. 285) as receiving her "with the ease and address of a man of the "world, but with a head and garb that the world rarely furnishes. ". . . A true acute Greek intelligence of countenance was set off by "a colouring of transparent olive, and a beard (like his hair) black "and glossy might have become the high priest of Solomon's temple."

"Passed the morning," writes Matthews (*Diary of an Invalid*, 5th ed., p. 265), "at the Armenian convent;—a very interesting "establishment, where, as long as the present librarian—(Father "Paschal Aucher)—a man of great learning, very extensive know-"ledge of the world, and most amiable manners—continues in office, "a few hours may be passed most agreeably."

Digitized by Google

P.S.—Remember me to Mr. G[ifford], with all duty.

I hear that the *E[dinburgh] R[eview]* has cut up Coleridge's *Christabel*, and me for praising it, which omen, I think, bodes no great good to your forthcome or coming Canto and Castle (of Chillon):[1] my run of luck within the last year seems to have taken a turn every way; but never mind, I will bring myself through in the end—if not, I can but be where I began: in the mean time, I am not displeased to be where I am—I mean, at Venice. My Adriatic nymph is this moment here, and I must therefore repose from this letter, "rocked "by the beating of her heart."

## 623.—To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

Venice, January 2d 1817.

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,—On this day, the anniversary of my marriage, I receive your letter dated the (10th December) the birthday of my daughter Ada. Is not this an odd coincidence? And on this day, the anniversary also of the publication of the *Corsair*, I receive a letter from Murray announcing the publication of the poems which I sent to England in the Autumn. And is not that odd?

Of Venice I sent you some account a few days ago. At present I am a little pressed for time, but will write you again in a week.

Pray did you receive a letter from me from Milan containing some of the hand-writing of Monti the poet?

1. Canto III. of *Childe Harold* was published November 18, 1816. *The Prisoner of Chillon, and other Poems* was published in a separate volume, December 5, 1816. Murray writes to Byron, December 13, 1816 (*Memoir of John Murray*, vol. i. p. 369), telling him that he had sold 7000 of each volume at the Booksellers' dinner at the Albion Tavern.

Digitized by Google

I gave it you to give to any of your acquaintance—to Lady B. if you like, as she is fond of collecting such things. I bear her no animosity, and she might receive these at least from you.

I have little to add about Venice to what I said before, in my former letter.

Ever yours, in haste, and most affect^ly^,

B.

P.S.—You do not say a word of the *po's*, published some time. How odd! Have you not had them sent to you?

## 624.—To John Murray.

Venice, Jan. 2, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter has arrived. Pray, in publishing the 3^d^ canto, have you *omitted* any passage or passages? I hope *not;* and indeed wrote to you on my way over the Alps to prevent such an accident—say in your next whether or not the *whole* of the canto (as sent to you) has been published. I wrote to you again the other day, (*twice*, I think,) and shall be glad to hear of the reception of those letters.

To-day is the 2d of January. On this day *3* years ago *The Corsair's* publication is dated, I think, in my letter to Moore. On this day *two* years I married—"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth—blessed be the "name of the Lord."—I sha'n't forget the day in a hurry, and will take care to keep the Anniversary before the Evening is over. It is odd enough that I this day received a letter from you announcing the publication of *Cd. Hd.*, etc., etc., on the day of the date of *The Corsair;* and that I also received one from my Sister,

Digitized by Google

written on the 10th of Decr., my daughter's birth-day (and relative chiefly to my daughter), and arriving on the day of the date of my marriage, this present 2d of January, the month of my birth,—and various other Astrologous matters, which I have no time to enumerate.

By the way, you might as well write to Hentsch, my Genevese banker, and enquire whether the *two packets* consigned to his care were or were not delivered to Mr. St. Aubyn,[1] or if they are still in his keeping. One contains papers, letters, and all the original MS. of your 3d canto, as first conceived; and the other, some bones from the field of Morat.[2] Many thanks for your news, and the good spirits in which your letter is written.

Venice and I agree very well; but I do not know that I have any thing new to say, except of the last new opera, which I sent in my late letter. The Carnival is commencing, and there is a good deal of fun here and there—besides business; for all the world are making up their intrigues for the season—changing, or going on upon a renewed lease. I am very well off with Marianna, who is not at all a person to tire me; firstly, because I

1. Of the St. Aubyn entries in Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses*, p. 1242, three are possible. But James (No. 20) was at Lincoln's Inn in 1817; Robert Thomas (No. 24) was in orders. Possibly, therefore, this is No. 28, William John St. Aubyn, who matriculated at Christ Church in 1814, *æt.* 19, became Rector of Stoke Damerel in 1828, and died July 30, 1877.

2. At Morat, on the lake of the same name, the Swiss defeated Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, June 22, 1476 (see *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanzas lxiii., lxiv.). The bones of the slain Burgundians were deposited in a building near the village of Meyriez. Three centuries later, when Switzerland was occupied by the armies of the French Republic, a regiment of Burgundians "tore down "the 'bone-house,'" covered the bones with earth, and planted a tree of Liberty on the mound. The tree died; the rain washed away the soil; the bones were again uncovered. In 1882 the remains were again buried, and the victory commemorated by a marble obelisk (Kirk's *History of Charles the Bold*, vol. iii. pp. 404, 405). The relics are now in the possession of Mr. Murray.

Digitized by Google

do not tire of a woman *personally*, but because they are generally bores in their disposition; and, secondly, because she is amiable, and has a tact which is not always the portion of the fair creation; and, thirdly, she is very pretty; and, fourthly—but there is no occasion for further specification. I have passed a great deal of my time with her since my arrival at Venice, * * . . . * * * * * So far we have gone on very well; as to the future, I never anticipate—"*Carpe diem*"—the past at least is one's own, which is one reason for making sure of the present. So much for my proper liaison.

The general state of morals here is much the same as in the Doges' time; a woman is virtuous (according to the code) who limits herself to her husband and one lover; those who have two, three, or more, are a little *wild;* but it is only those who are indiscriminately diffuse, and form a low connection, such as the Princess of Wales with her courier,[1] (who, by the way, is made a knight of Malta,) who are considered as overstepping the modesty of marriage. In Venice, the Nobility have

1. The Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline, left England in 1814. At Milan, in October of that year, Bartolommeo Bergami was engaged as her courier. In the Queen's trial before the House of Lords (August—November, 1820), evidence was offered in support of the charge of her having committed adultery with Bergami, who was undoubtedly treated by her with great favour. From October, 1814, till she returned to England in 1820, he was her constant companion; she procured him a Sicilian barony, and a knighthood of Malta; and she surrounded herself with his relations. In September, 1816, the Princess returned with Bergami from Jerusalem, and lived at the Villa d'Este, near Como. From August, 1817, to 1820, she lived at Pesaro, where Bergami acted as her chamberlain, and nine of his relations held places in her household. Byron had met her in London. Raikes, in his Journal for April 6, 1841 (vol. iv. p. 140), has this entry: "The papers "mention that Bergami, the courier, whose name was so prominent "in Queen Caroline's trial, and who, it appears, had acquired the "title of Marquis, died lately of an apoplectic fit in a public-house "at Fossombroni, in the delegation of Urbino."

Digitized by Google

a trick of marrying with dancers or singers: and, truth to say, the women of their own order are by no means handsome; but the general race—the women of the 2d and other orders, the wives of the Advocates, merchants, and proprietors, and untitled gentry, are mostly *bel' sangue*, and it is with these that the more amatory connections are usually formed: there are also instances of stupendous constancy. I know a woman of fifty who never had but one lover, who dying early, she became devout, renouncing all but her husband: she piques herself, as may be presumed, upon this miraculous fidelity, talking of it occasionally with a species of misplaced morality, which is rather amusing. There is no convincing a woman here, that she is in the smallest degree deviating from the rule of right or the fitness of things, in having an *Amoroso:* the great sin seems to lie in concealing it, or in having more than one; that is, unless such an extension of the prerogative is understood and approved of by the prior claimant.

In my case, I do not know that I had any predecessor, and am pretty sure that there is no participator; and am inclined to think, from the youth of the party, and from the frank undisguised way in which every body avows everything in this part of the world, when there is anything to avow, as well as from some other circumstances, such as the marriage being recent, etc., etc., etc., that this is the *premier pas:* it does not much signify.

In another sheet, I send you some sheets of a grammar, English and Armenian,[1] for the use of the

1. This volume is entitled "*Grammar, English and Armenian,* "by Father Paschal Aucher, D.D., Member of the Armenian "Academy of St. Lazarus," and bears for epigraph the saying of Charles the Fifth, "By as many languages as a man can speak, so "many times more is he a man" (Moore). "I will most willingly "take fifty copies," writes Murray (*Memoir*, vol. i. p. 370).

Digitized by Google

Armenians, of which I promoted, and indeed induced, the publication: (it cost me but a thousand francs—French livres.) I still pursue my lessons in the language, without any rapid progress, but advancing a little daily. Padre Paschal, with some little help from me, as translator of his Italian into English, is also proceeding in an MS. Grammar for the *English* acquisition of Armenian, which will be printed also, when finished.

We want to know if there are any *Armenian types*[1] or letterpress in England—at Oxford, Cambridge, or elsewhere? You know, I suppose, that, many years ago, the two Whistons published in England an original text of a history of Armenia, with their own Latin translation? Do those types still exist? and where? Pray enquire among your learned acquaintance.

When this grammar (I mean the one now printing) is done, will you have any objection to take 40 or fifty copies, which will not cost in all above five or ten guineas, and try the curiosity of the learned with a sale of them? Say yes or no, as you like. I can assure you that they have some very curious books and MS., chiefly translations from Greek originals now lost. They are, besides, a much respected and learned community, and the study of their language was taken up with great

1. Murray, January 22, 1817 (*Memoir of John Murray*, vol. i. p. 371), says, "I forgot to mention above that I have as yet "ascertained only that there are no Armenian types at Cambridge." In Talbot Reed's *History of the Old English Letter Foundries* (p. 68) occurs the following passage: "In England the first Armenian "types were those presented by Dr. Fell to Oxford in 1667. In "the prolegomena of Walton's *Polyglot*, the alphabet there given "had been cut in wood. In 1736 Caslon cut a neat Armenian "(pica) for Whiston's edition of Moses Chorenensis; and these two "were the only founts in England before 1820." The work of the two Whistons, to which Byron refers, was the *Mosis Chorenensis Historiæ Armeniacæ Lib. III. Accedit ejusdem Scriptoris Epitome Geographiæ. . . . Armenice et Latine, . . . cum notis Gulielmi et Georgii, Gul. Whistoni filii*, London, 1736, 4°.

Digitized by Google

ardour by some literary Frenchmen[1] in Buonaparte's time.

I have not done a stitch of poetry since I left Switzerland, and have not, at present, the *estro* upon me: the truth is, that you are *afraid* of having a 4th canto *before* September, and of another copyright; but I have at present no thoughts of resuming that poem nor of beginning any other. If I write, I think of trying prose; but I dread introducing living people, or applications which might be made to living people: perhaps one day or other, I may attempt some work of fancy in prose, descriptive of Italian manners and of human passions; but at present I am preoccupied. As for poesy, mine is the *dream* of my sleeping Passions; when they are awake, I cannot speak their language, only in their Somnambulism, and just now they are not dormant.

If Mr. G[ifford] wants *Carte blanche* as to *The Siege of Corinth*, he has it, and may do as he likes with it.

I sent you a letter contradictory of the Cheapside man (who invented the story you speak of) the other day. My best respects to Mr. Gifford, and such of my friends as you may see at your house. I wish you all prosperity and new year's gratulation, and am

Yours, ever and truly,

B.

To the Armenian Grammar, the following fragment, found among Byron's papers, seems to have been intended as a Preface. According to Mackay (*Lord Byron at the Armenian Convent*, p. 79), Pasquale Aucher did not approve of the Preface, because it contained an attack on the Turkish Government. Byron retorted,

1. Especially by Jean Antoine Saint Martin (1791–1832), whose *Mémoires sur l'Arménie* were published in 1818; Louis Matthieu Langlès (1763–1824), Professor of Persian at the School of Oriental Languages in Paris, and Keeper of Oriental MSS. at the *Bibliothèque royale*; and others.

Digitized by Google

"What! you refuse to print this preface because it is severe on "your masters and oppressors! Slaves and cowards! You ought "to have hard masters; you are not worthy of the great nation "from which you sprang."

The English reader will probably be surprised to find my name associated with a work of the present description, and inclined to give me more credit for my attainments as a linguist than they deserve.

As I would not willingly be guilty of a deception, I will state, as shortly as I can, my own share in the compilation, with the motives which led to it. On my arrival at Venice, in the year 1816, I found my mind in a state which required study, and study of a nature which should leave little scope for the imagination, and furnish some difficulty in the pursuit.

At this period I was much struck—in common, I believe, with every other traveller—with the society of the Convent of St. Lazarus, which appears to unite all the advantages of the monastic institution, without any of its vices.

The neatness, the comfort, the gentleness, the unaffected devotion, the accomplishments, and the virtues of the brethren of the order, are well fitted to strike the man of the world with the conviction that "there is "another and a better" even in this life.

These men are the priesthood of an oppressed and a noble nation, which has partaken of the proscription and bondage of the Jews and of the Greeks, without the sullenness of the former or the servility of the latter. This people has attained riches without usury, and all the honours that can be awarded to slavery without intrigue. But they have long occupied, nevertheless, a part of "the House of Bondage," who has lately multiplied her many mansions. It would be difficult, perhaps, to

Digitized by Google

find the annals of a nation less stained with crimes than those of the Armenians, whose virtues have been those of peace, and their vices those of compulsion. But whatever may have been their destiny—and it has been bitter—whatever it may be in future, their country must ever be one of the most interesting on the globe; and perhaps their language only requires to be more studied to become more attractive. If the Scriptures are rightly understood, it was in Armenia that Paradise was placed—Armenia, which has paid as dearly as the descendants of Adam for that fleeting participation of its soil in the happiness of him who was created from its dust. It was in Armenia that the flood first abated, and the dove alighted. But with the disappearance of Paradise itself may be dated almost the unhappiness of the country; for though long a powerful kingdom, it was scarcely ever an independent one, and the satraps of Persia and the pachas of Turkey have alike desolated the region where God created man in his own image.

## 625.—To John Murray.

Venice, January 24, 1817.

Dear Sir,—By the enclosed you will perceive that Mr. Hentsch consigned to Mr. St. Aubyn the packages long ago. I will therefore thank you to enquire after the said Mr. St. Aubyn of the University of Oxford, son of Sir John St. Aubyn, and lately travelling in Switzerland. He had them before the 17th Novr, and, as it was at his own offer and desire that he took this trouble, I hope he has—or will fulfill it. The parcel for Mrs. Leigh contained papers and the one addressed to you some relics of Morat.

I have been requested by the Countess Albrizzi here to present her with *The Works;* I wish you therefore to

Digitized by Google

send me a copy, that I may comply with her requisition. You may include the last published, of which I have seen and know nothing, but from your letter of the 13th of December.

Mrs. Leigh tells me that most of her friends prefer the 2 first cantos. I do not know whether this be the general opinion or not (it is *not hers*); but it is natural it should be so. I, however, think differently, which is natural also; but who is right, or who is wrong, is of very little consequence.

Dr. Polidori, as I hear from him by letter from Pisa, is about to return to England to go to the Brazils on a medical Speculation with the Danish consul. As you are in the favour of the powers that be, could you not get him some letters of recommendation from some of your Government friends to some of the Portuguese settlers? He understands his profession well, and has no want of general talents; his faults are the faults of a pardonable vanity and youth. His remaining with me was out of the question; I have enough to do to manage my own scrapes; and as precepts without example are not the most gracious homilies, I thought it better to give him his congé: but I know no great harm of him, and some good. He is clever and accomplished; knows his profession, by all accounts, well; and is honourable in his dealings, and not at all malevolent. I think, with luck, he will turn out a useful member of society (from which he will lop the diseased members) and the College of Physicians. If you can be of any use to him, or know any one who can, pray be so, as he has his fortune to make. He has kept a *medical journal* under the eye of *Vacca*[1] (the first surgeon on the Continent) at Pisa:

1. André Vacca Berlinghieri (1772-1826) studied in London (1795), under Bell and Hunter. He invented several valuable

Digitized by Google

Vacca has corrected it, and it must contain some valuable hints or information on the practice of this country. If you can aid him in publishing this also, by your influence with your brethren, do; I do not ask you to publish it yourself, because that sort of request is too personal and embarrassing. He has also a tragedy, of which, having seen nothing, I say nothing: but the very circumstance of his having made these efforts (if they are only efforts), at one-and-twenty, is in his favour, and proves him to have good dispositions for his own improvement. So if, in the way of commendation or recommendation, you can aid his objects with your government friends, I wish you would. I should think some of your Admiralty Board might be likely to have it in their power.

Yours very truly,

B.

## 626.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, January 28, 1817.

Your letter of the 8th is before me. The remedy for your plethora is simple—abstinence. I was obliged to have recourse to the like some years ago, I mean in point of *diet*, and, with the exception of some convivial weeks and days, (it might be months, now and then), have kept to Pythagoras ever since. For all this, let me hear that you are better. You must not *indulge* in "filthy beer," nor in porter, nor eat *suppers*—the last are the devil to those who swallow dinner. * * * *

surgical appliances and instruments, such as the compress for aneurism and the bistouri boutonné. He was placed in charge of the school of surgery at Pisa, where he died, September 6, 1826. In the dedicatory letter to Hobhouse, prefixed to *Childe Harold*, Canto IV., Vacca is mentioned among the "great names" which Italy still possessed.

Digitized by Google

I am truly sorry to hear of your father's misfortune[1]—cruel at any time, but doubly cruel in advanced life. However, you will, at least, have the satisfaction of doing your part by him, and, depend upon it, it will not be in vain. Fortune, to be sure, is a female, but not such a b * * as the rest (always excepting your wife and my sister from such sweeping terms); for she generally has some justice in the long run. I have no spite against her, though between her and Nemesis I have had some sore gauntlets to run—but then I have done my best to deserve no better. But to *you*, she is a good deal in arrear, and she will come round—mind if she don't: you have the vigour of life, of independence, of talent, spirit, and character all with you. What you can do for yourself, you have done and will do; and surely there are some others in the world who would not be sorry to be of use, if you would allow them to be useful, or at least attempt it.

I think of being in England in the spring. If there is a row, by the sceptre of King Ludd, but I'll be one; and if there is none, and only a continuance of "this meek, "piping time of peace,"[2] I will take a cottage a hundred yards to the south of your abode, and become your neighbour; and we will compose such canticles, and hold such dialogues, as shall be the terror of the *Times* (including the newspaper of that name), and the wonder, and honour, and praise, of the *Morning Chronicle* and posterity.

1. John Moore, the poet's father, was dismissed from his post of barrack-master at Dublin. The son allowed him £100 a year, and paid his debts (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. ii. pp. 111–113, 116, 253).

2. "Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time."
*Richard III.*, act i. sc. 1.

Digitized by Google

I rejoice to hear of your forthcoming in February—though I tremble for the "magnificence," which you attribute to the new *Childe Harold*. I am glad you like it; it is a fine indistinct piece of poetical desolation, and my favourite. I was half mad during the time of its composition, between metaphysics, mountains, lakes, love unextinguishable, thoughts unutterable, and the nightmare of my own delinquencies. I should, many a good day, have blown my brains out, but for the recollection that it would have given pleasure to my mother-in-law; and, even *then*, if I could have been certain to haunt her —— but I won't dwell upon these trifling family matters.

Venice is in the *estro* of her carnival, and I have been up these last two nights at the ridotto [1] and the opera, and all that kind of thing. Now for an adventure. A few days ago a gondolier brought me a billet without a subscription, intimating a wish on the part of the writer to meet me either in gondola or at the island of San Lazaro, or at a third rendezvous, indicated in the note. "I know

1. *Ridotto* is said to be derived from the Latin *reductus*, and to mean "music reduced to a full score." It thence gained the meaning of an entertainment of music and dancing, and was used as a synonym for "masquerades." Bramston, in *The Man of Taste* (1733), says—

> "In Lent, if masquerades displease the town,
> Call 'em ridottos, and they still go down."

The name survived in the *Redoutensaal* of Vienna, and the *Redoutentänze* of composers. The word has also been derived from the sense in which it is used by Dante, *i.e.* "a shelter," or "place of refuge," whence it came to mean "a place of convivial meeting." In Udino's *Italian-French-German Dictionary* (Frankfurt, 1674), the German equivalent is given as *Spielhaus*. Byron, in *Beppo* (stanza lviii.), says—

> "They went to the Ridotto;—'tis a hall
> Where people dance, and sup, and dance again;
> Its proper name, perhaps, were a masqued ball,
> But that's of no importance to my strain."



Digitized by Google

"the country's disposition well"[1]—in Venice "they do "let Heaven see those tricks they dare not show," etc., etc.; so, for all response, I said that neither of the three places suited me; but that I would either be at home at ten at night *alone*, or be at the ridotto at midnight, where the writer might meet me masked. At ten o'clock I was at home and alone (Marianna was gone with her husband to a conversazione), when the door of my apartment opened, and in walked a well-looking and (for an Italian) *bionda* girl of about nineteen, who informed me that she was married to the brother of my *amorosa*, and wished to have some conversation with me. I made a decent reply, and we had some talk in Italian and Romaic (her mother being a Greek of Corfu), when lo! in a very few minutes, in marches, to my very great astonishment, Marianna Segati, *in propriâ personâ*, and after making a most polite courtesy to her sister-in-law and to me, without a single word seizes her said sister-in-law by the hair, and bestows upon her some sixteen slaps, which would have made your ear ache only to hear their echo. I need not describe the screaming which ensued. The luckless visitor took flight. I seized Marianna, who, after several vain efforts to get away in pursuit of the enemy, fairly went into fits in my arms; and, in spite of reasoning, eau de Cologne, vinegar, half a pint of water, and God knows what other waters beside, continued so till past midnight.

After damning my servants for letting people in without apprizing me, I found that Marianna in the morning had seen her sister-in-law's gondolier on the stairs, and, suspecting that his apparition boded her no good, had

1. "*Iago.* I know our country disposition well;
In Venice they do let Heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands."
*Othello*, act iii. sc. 3.

Digitized by Google

either returned of her own accord, or been followed by her maids or some other spy of her people to the conversazione, from whence she returned to perpetrate this piece of pugilism. I had seen fits before, and also some small scenery of the same genus in and out of our island: but this was not all. After about an hour, in comes—who? why, Signor Segati, her lord and husband, and finds me with his wife fainting upon the sofa, and all the apparatus of confusion, dishevelled hair, hats, handkerchiefs, salts, smelling-bottles—and the lady as pale as ashes, without sense or motion. His first question was, "What is all this?" The lady could not reply—so I did. I told him the explanation was the easiest thing in the world; but in the mean time it would be as well to recover his wife—at least, her senses. This came about in due time of suspiration and respiration.

You need not be alarmed—jealousy is not the order of the day in Venice, and daggers are out of fashion; while duels, on love matters, are unknown—at least, with the husbands. But, for all this, it was an awkward affair; and though he must have known that I made love to Marianna, yet I believe he was not, till that evening, aware of the extent to which it had gone. It is very well known that almost all the married women have a lover; but it is usual to keep up the forms, as in other nations. I did not, therefore, know what the devil to say. I could not out with the truth, out of regard to her, and I did not choose to lie for my sake;—besides, the thing told itself. I thought the best way would be to let her explain it as she chose (a woman being never at a loss—the devil always sticks by them)—only determining to protect and carry her off, in case of any ferocity on the part of the Signor. I saw that he was quite calm. She went to bed, and next day—how they settled it, I know not,

Digitized by Google

but settle it they did. Well—then I had to explain to Marianna about this never-to-be-sufficiently-confounded sister-in-law; which I did by swearing innocence, eternal constancy, etc., etc. * * * But the sister-in-law, very much discomposed with being treated in such wise, has (not having her own shame before her eyes) told the affair to half Venice, and the servants (who were summoned by the fight and the fainting) to the other half. But, here, nobody minds such trifles, except to be amused by them. I don't know whether you will be so, but I have scrawled a long letter out of these follies.

Believe me ever, etc.

## 627.—To John Murray.

Venice, February 15, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I have received your two letters, but not the parcel you mention. As the Waterloo spoils[1] are arrived, I will make you a present of them, if you choose to accept them; pray do.

I do not exactly understand from your letter what has been omitted, or what not, in the publication; but I shall see probably some day or other. I could not attribute any but a *good* motive to Mr. G[ifford] or yourself in such omission; but as our politics are so very opposite, we should probably differ as to the passages. However, if it is only a *note* or notes and a line or so, it cannot signify.[2] You say "a *poem;*" *what poem?* You can tell me in your next.

1. Murray, writing to Byron, January 22, 1817 (*Memoir, etc., of John Murray*, vol. i. p. 372), says, "Mr. Gordon has carefully "deposited your spoils of Waterloo, which ornament my room, as "the best and indeed only means I have of preserving them for you." Byron's Waterloo relics are now in the possession of Mr. A. H. Hallam Murray.

2. "I rejoice to say," replies Murray, March 6, 1817, "that my

Digitized by Google

Of Mr. Hobhouse's quarrel with the *Quarterly Review*, I know very little except Barrow's article itself,[1] which was certainly harsh enough; but I quite agree that it would have been better not to answer—particularly after Mr. *W. W.*,[2] who never more will trouble you, trouble you. I have been uneasy, because Mr. H. told me that his letter or preface was to be addressed to *me*. Now, he and I are friends of many years; I have many obligations

"errors of omission come within the pale of your forgiveness. The "Poem that was omitted is entitled, 'Extract from an unpublished "Poem.' There is no politics in this, and it was omitted because "Mr. G[ifford] thought it was so much eclipsed by the others; and "the lines omitted in 'Chillon' are—

"'Nor slew I of my subjects one;
What sovereign hath so little done?'

"because they abruptly unhinged the pleasing associations arising "from the rest of the poem. The Note omitted was, I think, some "personal allusion to poor Louis XVIII."

1. Hobhouse's *Letters written by an Englishman resident at Paris during the last reign of Napoleon* (2 vols.) was severely criticized by Croker in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1816 (vol. xiv. pp. 443-452). In Paris, the French translation of the book was seized, and the translator and printer fined and imprisoned.

Writing to Murray, May 22, 1816, Hobhouse had said, "I "regret your fears, which are to deprive me of the only liberal "publisher in London. Lord have mercy on me, indeed. How- "ever, I think I should have had more need of the Lord's mercy, "if your critic had not been merciful and considerate enough not "to answer a single argument nor to attempt even to invalidate a "single fact. I suppose his name is a secret. I do not care so as "it was not written by Mr. Gifford, who, I would fain think, does "not really believe me to be a rogue, a fool, an atheist, a wag, and "a murderer, which, so far as I can make out from the pleasantry "of the article, is the *only* charge made against me. Some of my "friends (but then the dogs are Whigs) . . . think I have a right "to return an answer to the anonymous editor of the *Quarterly* "*Review* as '*a being of the name of Gifford;*' such, you may "recollect, was his own designation (from some stupid fellow that "attacked him) of himself. Between ourselves, I do not think "your gentleman was right to attack my father, who could not help "getting a wag and assassin of a son. Though I may be neither "*accomplished* nor *amiable*, he certainly is *worthy*."

2. For Wedderburn Webster's reply to the *Quarterly Review*, which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* for December 19, 1816, see Appendix III.

Digitized by Google

to him, and he none to me which have not been cancelled and more than repaid; but Mr. G[ifford] and I are friends also, and he has moreover been literarily so, through thick and thin, in despite of difference of years, morals, habits, and even *politics*, which last would, I believe, if they were in heaven, divide the Trinity; and therefore I feel in a very awkward situation between the two, Mr. G. and my friend H., and can only wish that they had no differences, or that such as they have were accommodated. The answer I have not seen, for —it is odd enough for people so intimate—but Mr. H. and I are very sparing of our literary confidences. For example, the other day he wished to have an MS. of the 3[d] canto to read over to his brother, etc., which was refused;—and I have never seen his journals, nor he mine—(I only kept the short one of the mountains for my sister)—nor do I think that hardly ever he or I saw any of our own productions previous to their publication.

The article in the *E[dinburgh] R[eview]* on Coleridge I have not seen; but whether I am attacked in it or not, or in any other of the same journal, I shall never think ill of Mr. Jeffrey on that account, nor forget that his conduct towards me has been certainly most handsome during the last four or more years.

I forgot to mention to you that a kind of Poem in dialogue[1] (in blank verse) or drama, from which "The "Incantation" is an extract, begun last summer in Switzerland, is finished; it is in three acts; but of a very wild,

1. Murray, in a letter to Byron, dated March 20, 1817 (*Memoir, etc.*, vol. i. p. 382), says, "Gifford gave me yesterday the first act "of *Manfred*, with a delighted countenance, telling me it was "wonderfully poetical, and desiring me to assure you that it well "merits publication." *Manfred* was published June 16, 1817. "The Incantation" was published with *The Prisoner of Chillon*. To it is added the note: "The following Poem was a Chorus in "an unfinished Witch Drama, which was begun some years ago."

Digitized by Google

metaphysical, and inexplicable kind. Almost all the persons—but two or three—are spirits of the earth and air, or the waters; the scene is in the Alps; the hero a kind of magician, who is tormented by a species of remorse, the cause of which is left half unexplained. He wanders about invoking these spirits, which appear to him, and are of no use; he at last goes to the very abode of the Evil principle *in propriâ personâ*, to evocate a ghost, which appears, and gives him an ambiguous and disagreeable answer; and in the 3[d] act he is found by his attendants dying in a tower where he studied his art. You may perceive by this outline that I have no great opinion of this piece of phantasy: but I have at least rendered it *quite impossible* for the stage, for which my intercourse with D[rury] Lane has given me the greatest contempt.

I have not even copied it off, and feel too lazy at present to attempt the whole; but when I have, I will send it you, and you may either throw it into the fire or not.[1]

## 628.—To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

Venice, February [? 19], 1817.

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,—Fletcher has requested me to remind you that *one* of his *boys* was to be a candidate for the Blue coat School, and as you know the Bentincks (who are governors), he begs by me that you will use your interest to obtain theirs. He has spoken to you (he says) on the subject already, and *Easter* is the *time*, so that you will not forget his request he hopes.

The Carnival closed last night, and I have been up all night at the masked ball of the Fenice, and am rather tired or so. It was a fine sight—the theatre illuminated,

1. The end of this letter is missing.

Digitized by Google

and all the world buffooning. I had my box full of visitors—masks of all kinds, and afterwards (as is the custom) went down to promenade the pit, which was boarded over level with the stage. All the Virtue and Vice in Venice was there. There has been the same sort of thing every night these six weeks—besides Operas, Ridottos, parties, and the Devil knows what. I went out *now* and *then*, but was less dissipated than you would expect.

I have hardly time for a word now, but will write again soon.

Yours ever,

B.

P.S.—I am *not* "*P. P.*;"[1] I assure you upon my honour, and do not understand to what book you allude, so that all your compliments are quite thrown away.

## 629.—To John Murray.

Venice, February 25, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you the other day in answer to your letter; at present I would trouble you with a commission, if you will be kind enough to undertake it.

1. Mrs. Leigh believed that Byron was the author of *The Black Dwarf* and *Old Mortality*, which appeared, December 1, 1816, as the first series of *Tales of my Landlord*. In Jedediah Cleishbotham's Introduction to *The Tales of my Landlord*, he assigns the work to "Peter, or Patrick, Pattieson," who, dying, had bequeathed it to Jedediah. In the description given of David Ritchie, the original of the "Black Dwarf," Mrs. Leigh seems to have detected autobiographic touches from Byron's hand,—a being "residing in solitude, "and haunted by a consciousness of his own deformity, and a sus- "picion of his being generally subjected to the scorn of his fellow- "men. . . . A jealous, misanthropical, and irritable temper, was "his prominent characteristic. The sense of his deformity haunted "him like a phantom. . . . Driven into solitude, he became an "admirer of the beauties of nature. . . . His only living favourites "were a dog and a cat, to which he was particularly attached," etc., etc.

Digitized by Google

You, perhaps, know Mr. Love, the jeweller, of Old Bond Street? In 1813, when in the intention of returning to Turkey, I purchased of him, and paid (*argent comptant*), about a dozen snuff-boxes, of more or less value, as presents for some of my Mussulman acquaintance. These I have now with me. The other day, having occasion to make an alteration in the lid of one (to place a portrait in it), it has turned out to be *silver-gilt* instead of *gold*, for which last it was sold and paid for. This was discovered by the workman in trying it, before taking off the hinges and working upon the lid. I have of course recalled and preserved the box *in statu quo*. What I wish you to do is, to see the said Mr. Love, and inform him of this circumstance, adding, from me, that I will take care he shall not have done this with impunity.

If there is no remedy in law, there is at least the equitable one of making known his *guilt*,—that is, his silver-*gilt*, and be damned to him.

I shall carefully preserve all the purchases I made of him on that occasion for my return, as the Plague in Turkey is a barrier to travelling there at present, or rather the endless quarantine which would be the consequence before one could land in coming back. Pray state the matter to him with due ferocity.

I sent you the other day some extracts from a kind of drama which I had begun in Switzerland and finished here; you will tell me if they are received—they were only in a letter. I have not yet had energy to copy it out, or I would send you the whole in different covers.

The Carnival closed this day last week.

Mr. Hobhouse is still at Rome, I believe. I am at present a little unwell;—sitting up too late and some subsidiary dissipations have lowered my blood a good

Digitized by Google

deal; but I have at present the quiet and temperance of Lent before me.

Believe me, very truly yours, etc.,

B.

P.S.—Remember me to Mr. G[iffor]d.—I have not received your parcel or parcels.—Look into "Moore's "(Dr. Moore's) *View of Italy*" [1] for me; in one of the volumes you will find an account of the *Doge Valiere* (it ought to be Falieri) and his conspiracy, or the motives of it. Get it transcribed for me, and send it in a letter to me soon. I want it, and cannot find so good an account of that business here; though the veiled portrait, and the place where he was once crowned, and afterwards decapitated, still exist and are shown. I have searched all their histories; but the policy of the old Aristocracy made their writers silent on his motives, which were a private grievance against one of the Patricians.

I mean to write a tragedy upon the subject, which

1. *View of Society and Manners in Italy; with anecdotes relating to some eminent characters*, 2 vols., London, 1781. The book was written by John Moore, M.D. (1729–1802), father of Sir John Moore and author of *Zeluco* (1786). In the second preface (1813) to *Childe Harold*, Byron says that he had once meant to make his Harold "a modern Timon, perhaps a poetical Zeluco." In his preface to *Marino Faliero* (1820) he says of Moore's *View of Italy*: "His "account is false and flippant, full of stale jests about old men and "young wives, and wondering at so great an effect from so slight "a cause. How so acute and severe an observer of mankind as the "author of *Zeluco* could wonder at this is inconceivable." Marino Faliero, elected Doge in 1354, was irritated by the slight punishment inflicted on Steno for an insult to his wife. In his rage he formed a conspiracy for the destruction of all the Venetian nobility. The plot was discovered, and Faliero executed in 1355. With him died Calendaro, the architect of the Ducal Palace. The incident is also the subject of a tragedy by Casimir Delavigne (*Marino Faliero*, 1829). Rogers alludes to it in his *Italy*, "St. Mark's Place"—

> "Enter the Palace by the marble stairs
> Down which the grizzly head of old Faliër
> Rolled from the block."

Digitized by Google

appears to me very dramatic; an old man, jealous, and conspiring against the state of which he was the actually reigning Chief. The last circumstance makes it the most remarkable and only fact of the kind in all history of all nations.

## 630.—To John Murray.

Venice, Feby 28th, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Enclosed in this and another cover is the first act of the kind of dramatic poem, from which I sent you some extracts in a recent letter. I will copy out the rest at leisure and send it you piecemeal by the post.

Yours ever,

B.

## 631.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, February 28, 1817.

You will, perhaps, complain as much of the frequency of my letters now, as you were wont to do of their rarity. I think this is the fourth within as many moons. I feel anxious to hear from you, even more than usual, because your last indicated that you were unwell. At present, I am on the invalid regimen myself. The Carnival—that is, the latter part of it, and sitting up late o' nights, had knocked me up a little. But it is over,—and it is now Lent, with all its abstinence and sacred music.

The mumming closed with a masked ball at the Fenice, where I went, as also to most of the ridottos, etc., etc.; and, though I did not dissipate much upon the whole, yet I find "the sword wearing out the scab-"bard,"[1] though I have but just turned the corner of twenty-nine.

1. There is apparently no earlier use of this phrase than that here

Digitized by Google

So we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And Love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

I have lately had some news of litter*atoor*, as I heard the editor of the *Monthly*[1] pronounce it once upon a time. I hear that W. W. has been publishing and responding to the attacks of the *Quarterly*, in the learned Perry's *Chronicle*. I read his poesies[2] last autumn, and,

made by Byron (see *Notes and Queries*, 5th series, vol. ii. August 8, 22, 1874, pp. 109 and 156). Scott uses the phrase in the Introduction to *The Talisman*, which was published in 1825. Byron, perhaps, translates the French saying, "La lame use le fourreau."

1. For G. E. Griffiths, see *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 102, *note* 1.

2. The title-page of Wedderburn Webster's *Waterloo and other Poems* bears as its inscription a quotation from *Childe Harold*—

"Lo! when the giant on the mountain stands
To shed before his shrine the blood he deems most meet."

The volume was printed, in 1816, by Didot, at Paris—a fact which may partially explain the punctuation and typographical errors. In the Preface, Webster refers to the "Gigantic Talents and Mighty "Genius of my friend Lord Byron." Poem iv. (p. 41), "On a "favorite Dog buried at Newstead Abbey," runs as follows:—

"Oh faithful Sydney! friend indeed sincere,
Thy virtues claim a Tributary tear—
Unblest as man—yet with his nobler part—
Undaunted courage—and an honest heart:
Let no proud son of Earth molest this Urn,
But go—and from its lowly tenant learn—

Digitized by Google

amongst them found an epitaph on his bull-dog, and another on *myself*. But I beg leave to assure him (like the astrologer Partridge [1]) that I am not only alive now, but was alive also at the time he wrote it. * * Hobhouse has (I hear, also) expectorated a letter against the *Quarterly*, addressed to me. I feel awkwardly situated between him and Gifford, both being my friends.

> These lines of Sorrow—this rude stone shall last
> When he—and all his Pageantry are past!"
>
> 1811.

Poem x. (pp. 47, 48) consists of "Lines on Lord B—n's "Portrait"—

> "Such thy form O! B—n, but say what art
> May paint the colours of thy nobler heart;
> Say—who may trace the features of a mind,
> That stands confest—a model to mankind—
> A mind, that peers above that base controul,
> Which stamps the common, low, pedantic soul;
> Great without pride—without ambition high—
> In this dull Day—to *thee*—the Muses fly;
> And mark thy verse—in lofty numbers glide,
> As rolls the flood in Danube's lawless tide—
> The sense of feeling—and the soul of thought,
> On Earth unteachable—by Heaven taught;
> Long may the spirit of thy varied Page,
> Redeem from infamy this lifeless age;
> And, when Desease may fade the rose of spring,
> Or rotting Death be seen upon the wing,
> Long may this canvass triumph o'er decay,
> Tho' man's dark fate hath torn thee far away!
> Then may eternal Bays, that never fade,
> Entwine the cypress, round thy laurell'd shade!"
>
> 1813.

1. John Partridge (1644–1715), astrologer and almanac-maker, was selected by Swift as the object of his attack on the quacks of the day. Swift's *Predictions for the Year* 1708, written under the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, foretold Partridge's death on March 29. On March 30 appeared a pamphlet under the title of *The Accomplishment of the first of Mr. Bickerstaff's Predictions, being an account of the death of Mr. Partridge the almanack-maker on the 29th inst.*; and this was followed by Swift's *Elegy on the Death of Mr. Partridge*. Partridge's name was struck off the rolls of the Stationers' Company on account of his supposed death, and he advertised in the papers that he "was not only now alive, but was also alive on the 29th of "March last."

Digitized by Google

And this is your month of going to press—by the body of Diana! (a Venetian oath,) I feel as anxious—but not fearful for you—as if it were myself coming out in a work of humour, which would, you know, be the antipodes of all my previous publications. I don't think you have any thing to dread but your own reputation. You must keep up to that. As you never showed me a line of your work, I do not even know your measure; but you must send me a copy by Murray forthwith, and then you shall hear what I think. I dare say you are in a pucker. Of all authors, you are the only really *modest* one I ever met with,—which would sound oddly enough to those who recollect your morals when you were young—that is, when you were *extremely* young—I don't mean to stigmatise you either with years or morality.

I believe I told you that the *E*[*dinburgh*] *R*[*eview*] had attacked me, in an article on Coleridge (I have not seen it)—"*Et tu*, Jeffrey?"—"there is nothing but "roguery in villanous man."[1] But I absolve him of all attacks, present and future; for I think he had already pushed his clemency in my behoof to the utmost, and I shall always think well of him. I only wonder he did not begin before, as my domestic destruction was a fine opening for all the world, of which all who could did well to avail themselves.

If I live ten years longer, you will see, however, that it is not over with me—I don't mean in literature, for that is nothing; and it may seem odd enough to say, I do not think it my vocation. But you will see that I shall do something or other—the times and fortune permitting—that, "like the cosmogony, or creation of the

1. "There is nothing but roguery to be found in villanous man." —*Henry IV.*, Part I. act ii. sc. 4.

Digitized by Google

"world, will puzzle the philosophers of all ages."[1] But I doubt whether my constitution will hold out. I have, at intervals, ex*or*cised it most devilishly.

I have not yet fixed a time of return, but I think of the spring. I shall have been away a year in April next. You never mention Rogers, nor Hodgson, your clerical neighbour, who has lately got a living near you. Has he also got a child yet?—his desideratum, when I saw him last. * * *

Pray let me hear from you, at your time and leisure, believing me ever and truly and affectionately, etc.

## 632.—To John Murray.

Venice, March 3, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,—In acknowledging the arrival of the article from the *Quarterly*,[2] which I received two days ago, I cannot express myself better than in the words of my sister Augusta, who (speaking of it) says, that it is written in a spirit "of the most feeling and kind nature." It is, however, something more; it seems to me (as far as the subject of it may be permitted to judge) to be *very well* written as a composition, and I think will do the journal no discredit, because even those who may condemn its partiality, must praise its generosity. The temptations to take another and less favourable view of

1. *The Vicar of Wakefield* (chap. xiv.). "Mr. Ephraim Jenkinson" induces the vicar to part with his horse by his show of learning. "Ay, sir," replied he, as if he had reserved all his learning to that moment, "ay, sir, the world is in its dotage, and yet the cosmogony "or creation of the world has puzzled philosophers of all ages."

2. Walter Scott wrote the article in the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1816 (vol. xvi. pp. 172–208) on *Childe Harold, Canto III.*, and *The Prisoner of Chillon, a Dream, and other Poems.* Murray, writing to Byron, March 6, 1817, says, "I induced Mr. S. to write "it from an expression of kindness regarding you in one of his "letters. I thought his mind was full of the subject, and it was out "in three days."

Digitized by Google

the question have been so great and numerous, that, what with public opinion, politics, etc., he must be a gallant as well as a good man, who has ventured in that place, and at this time—to write such an article even anonymously. Such things, however, are their own reward; and I even flatter myself that the writer, whoever he may be (and I have no guess), will not regret that the perusal of this has given me as much gratification as any composition of that nature could give, and more than any other has ever given,—and I have had a good many in my time of one kind or the other. It is not the mere praise, but there is a *tact* and a *delicacy* throughout, not only with regard to me, but to *others*, which, as it had not been observed *elsewhere*, I had till now doubted whether it could be observed *any where*.

Perhaps some day or other you will know or tell me the writer's name. Be assured, had the article been a harsh one, I should not have asked it.

I have lately written to you frequently, with *extracts*, etc., which I hope you have received, or will receive, with or before this letter.—Ever since the conclusion of the Carnival I have been unwell, (do not mention this on any account, to Augusta, for if I grow worse, she will know it too soon, and if I get better, there is no occasion that she should know it at all,) and have hardly stirred out of the house. However, I don't want a Physician; and if I did—very luckily those of Italy are the worst in the world, so that I should still have a chance. They have, I believe, one famous surgeon, Vacca, who lives at Pisa, who might be useful in case of dissection:—but he is some hundred miles off. My malady is a sort of lowish fever, originating from what my pugilistic "pastor "and master," Jackson,[1] would call "taking too much

1. For "Gentleman Jackson," see *Letters*, vol. i. p. 189, *note* 2.

Digitized by Google

"out of oneself." However, I am better within this day or two.

I missed seeing the new Patriarch's procession to St. Mark's the other day (owing to my indisposition), with six hundred and fifty priests in his rear—a "goodly "army." The admirable government of Vienna, in its edict from thence, authorizing his installation, prescribed, as part of the pageant, "a *Coach* and four horses."[1] To show how very, very "*German* to the matter" this was, you have only to suppose our parliament commanding the Archbishop of Canterbury to proceed from Hyde Park Corner to St. Paul's Cathedral in the Lord Mayor's barge, or the Margate Hoy. There is but St. Marc's Place in all Venice broad enough for a carriage to move, and it is paved with large smooth flagstones, so that the Chariot and horses of Elijah himself would be puzzled to manœuvre upon it. Those of Pharaoh might do better; for the canals—and particularly the Grand Canal—are sufficiently capacious and extensive for his whole host. Of course, no coach could be attempted; but the Venetians, who are very naïve as well as arch, were much amused with the ordinance.

The Armenian Grammar is published; but my Armenian studies are suspended for the present, till my head aches a little less. I sent you the other day, in two covers, the first act of *Manfred*, a drama as mad as

1. Hobhouse, in a letter to Murray (*Memoir, etc.*, vol. i. p. 389), dated December 7, 1817, writes, "As for the Austrians, they are "amiable nowhere but in Vienna. Their inaptitude for these "latitudes is beyond all expression or belief. Doubtless Lord B. "told you of the order of the Aulic Council for the Archbishop of "Aquileia to go to St. Mark's in a coach and six; as if the Lord "Mayor were ordered to go to St. James's Palace in a gondola." Horses were scarce at Venice. "There are only eight horses in "Venice: four are of brass, over the gate of the cathedral; and the "other four are alive in Lord Byron's stables" (Matthews, *Diary of an Invalid*, p. 263).



Digitized by Google

Nat. Lee's Bedlam tragedy, which was in 25 acts and some odd scenes:[1]—mine is but in three acts.

I find I have begun this letter at the wrong end: never mind; I must end it, then, at the right.

Yours ever very truly and obligedly,

BYRON.

P.S.—Marianna is very well. She has been sitting for her picture for me—a miniature which is very like.

## 633.—To Lady Byron.[2]

Venice, March 5th 1817.

A letter from Mr. Hanson apprizes me of the result of his correspondence with Sir Ralph Noel (of which he has transmitted a copy), and of his interviews with Dr. Lushington on the subject of our daughter. I am also informed of a bill in Chancery filed against me last Spring by Sir Ralph Noel, of which this is the first intimation, and of the subject of which I am ignorant.

Whatever may be the result of these discussions and the measures, which have led to them, and to which they may lead, remember, that I have not been the first to begin; but, being begun, neither shall I be the first to recede. I feel at length convinced that the feeling which I had cherished through all and in spite of all, namely —the hope of a reconciliation and reunion, however remote,—is indubitably useless; and although, all things considered, it could not be very sanguine, still it was sincere, and I cherished it as a sickly infatuation: and

1. Tom Brown (*Works*, ed. 1730, vol. ii. pp. 187, 188) says that, while in Bethlehem Hospital, Nathaniel Lee wrote a tragedy in twenty-five acts.

2. Printed from the rough draft in the possession of Mr. Murray.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Nat. Lee's Bedlam tragedy, which was in 25 acts and some odd scenes:[1]—mine is but in three acts.

I find I have begun this letter at the wrong end: never mind; I must end it, then, at the right.

Yours ever very truly and obligedly,

BYRON.

P.S.—Mariana is very well. She has been sitting for her picture for me—a miniature which is very like.

## 63.—To Lady Byron.[2]

Venice, March 5th 181[7].

A letter from Mr. Hanson apprizes me of the result of [illegible] correspondence with Sir Ralph Noel (of which [illegible] have given), and of his interviews with [illegible] on the subject of our daughter. I am [illegible] in Chancery filed against me [illegible] Noel, of which this is the first [illegible] object of which I am ignorant.

[illegible] be the result of these discussions [illegible] have led to them, and to which [illegible] you, that I have not been the [illegible] to [illegible] begun, neither shall I be the [illegible] to [illegible]. I am strongly convinced that the feeling [illegible] I had cherished through all and in spite of all, [illegible] the hope of a reconciliation and reunion, however remote,—is indubitably useless; and although, [illegible] considered, it could not be very sanguine, still it was sincere, and I cherished it as a sickly infatuation [illegible]

1. [illegible] Brown (*Works*, ed. 1730, vol. ii. pp. 187, 188) says that, while [illegible] Bedlam Hospital, Nathaniel Lee wrote a tragedy in twenty-five acts.

2. Printed from a rough draft in the possession of Mr. Murray.

Digitized by Google

James Faraday pinx.

Lady Byron

from a picture in the possession of James Ward Esq.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

now I part with it with a regret, perhaps bitterer of [than] that which I felt in parting with yourself.

It was generally understood, if not expressed, that all legal proceedings were to terminate in the act of our separation: to what then I am to attribute the bill, of which I am apprized, I am at a loss to conjecture. The object, however, is evident: it is to deprive me of my paternal right over my child, which I have the less merited, as I neither abused nor intended to abuse it. You and yours might have been satisfied with the outrages I have already suffered, if not by your design, at least by your means. I know your defence and your apology—duty and Justice; but *Qui n'est que juste, est dur:*[1] or if the French aphorism should seem light in the balance, I could refer you to an older language and a higher authority for the condemnation of conduct, which you may yet live to condemn in your own heart.

Throughout the whole of this unhappy business, I have done my best to avoid the bitterness, which, however, is yet amongst us; and it would be as well if even you at times recollected, that the man who has been sacrificed in fame, in feelings, in every thing, to the convenience of your family, was he whom you once loved, and who—whatever you may imagine to the contrary—loved you. If you conceive that I could be actuated by revenge against you, you are mistaken: I am not humble enough to be vindictive. Irritated I may have been, and may be—is it a wonder? but upon such irritation, beyond its momentary expression, I have not acted, from the hour that you quitted me to that in which I am made

1. Compare *Marino Faliero*, act v. sc. 1—

> "Alas! signor,
> He who is only just is cruel; who
> Upon the earth would live, were all judged justly?"

Digitized by Google

aware that our daughter is to be the entail of our disunion, the inheritor of our bitterness. If you think to reconcile yourself to yourself by accumulating harshness against me, you are again mistaken: you are not happy, nor even tranquil, nor will you ever be so, even to the very moderate degree which is permitted to general humanity. For myself, I have a confidence in my Fortune, which will yet bear me through. *Ταὐτόματον ἡμῶν κάλλιον βουλεύεται.*[1] The reverses, which have occurred, were what I should have expected; and, in considering you and yours merely as the instruments of my more recent adversity, it would be difficult for me to blame you, did not every thing appear to intimate a deliberate intention of as wilful malice on your part as could well be digested into a system. However, time and Nemesis will do that, which I would not, even were it in my power remote or immediate. You will smile at this piece of prophecy—do so, but recollect it: it is justified by all human experience. No one was ever even the involuntary cause of great evils to others, without a requital: I have paid and am paying for mine—so will you.

## 634.—To John Murray.

Venice, March 9, 1817.

My dear Sir,—In remitting the third act of the sort of dramatic poem of which you will by this time have received the two first (at least I hope so), which were sent within the last three weeks, I have little to observe, except that you must *not* publish it (if it ever is published) without giving me previous notice. I have really and truly no notion whether it is good or bad; and

1. The passage is perhaps corrupt. As they stand, the words might mean, "Chance is more just than we are."

Digitized by Google

as this was not the case with the principal of my former publications, I am, therefore, inclined to rank it but humbly. You will submit it to Mr. G[iffor]d, and to whomsoever you please besides. With regard to question of copyright (if it ever comes to publication), I do not know whether you would think *three hundred* guineas an over-estimate;[1] if you do, you may diminish it: I do not think it worth more; so you may see I make some difference between it and the others.

I have received your two Reviews[2] (but not the *Tales of my Landlord*): the *Quarterly* I acknowledged particularly in a letter to you, on its arrival, ten days ago. What you tell me of Perry petrifies me;[3] it is a rank

1. Murray gave the sum asked.

2. The two Reviews were the current numbers of the *Edinburgh* (No. liv. for December, 1816, published February 14, 1817) and the *Quarterly* (No. xxxi. for October, 1816, published February 11, 1817), in which Jeffrey and Scott had respectively reviewed the Third Canto of *Childe Harold*.

3. In a letter from Murray to Byron (February 18, 1817) is this passage: "A paragraph was inserted in the *Morning Chronicle* of "last week, headed, 'Mr. Croker and Lord B——,' and saying you "had written his character, which they would give in a few days. "This was taking so shameful a liberty with your name during your "absence, that I called upon Mr. Davies respecting it, and he "obligingly went to Perry, who confessed that he had not seen the "lines. I suspect that it was your incessant persecutor B., who "was the source of all affected public opinion respecting you." By "B." Murray probably means Lord Brougham. The following is the paragraph:—

"THE ADMIRALTY SCRIBE AND LORD B——.

"We have long heard doubts entertained whether the learned, "honourable, money-getting Secretary was ever likely to live in "after ages. His jobs, to be sure, shine conspicuous among those "of the present generation; but these may fade and be forgotten. "His *spaiches* in the House are not likely to last even so long as "his actions. His writings are sufficiently perishable, hardly living "through 24 hours. Mrs. Clarke, no doubt, has lent him a little "more celebrity; but then there are *certain coadjutors* of the worthy "Gentleman upon whom she has stamped a still more indelible "renown, as we may soon have occasion to explain more at large. "But the doubts upon this matter are now at an end. A very great

Digitized by Google

imposition. In or about February or March, 1816, I was given to understand that Mr. Croker was not only a coadjutor in the attacks of the *Courier* in 1814, but the author of some lines tolerably ferocious, then recently published in a Morning paper. Upon this I wrote a reprisal. The whole of the lines I have forgotten, and even the purport of them I scarcely remember; for on *your* assuring me that he was not, etc., etc., I put them into the *fire before your face*, and there *never was* but that *one rough* copy. Mr. Davies, the only person who ever heard them read, wanted a copy, which I refused. If, however, by some *impossibility*, which I cannot divine, the ghost of those rhymes should walk into the world, I never will deny what I have really written, but hold myself personally responsible for satisfaction, though I reserve to myself the right of disavowing all or any *fabrications*. To the previous facts you were a witness, and best know how far my recapitulation is correct; and I request that you will inform Mr. Perry from me, that I wonder he should permit such an abuse of my name and his paper; I say an *abuse*, because my absence, at least, demands some respect, and my presence and positive sanction could alone justify him in such a proceeding, even were the lines mine; and if false, there are no words for him. I repeat to you that the original was burnt before you on your *assurance*, and there *never* was a *copy*, nor even a verbal repetition,—very much to

"Poet of our own day, whose works will unquestionably outlive "both Mr. Fitzgerald, Mrs. Clarke, Mr. Barrow, the 4000*l.* job, "the 249*l.* 13*s.* 2½*d.* job, the *salute* business, the eaves-dropping, etc., "etc., etc., has, we find, taken pretty effectual steps for handing him "down to posterity, by embodying *some particulars* respecting him "in certain verses, of great merit and no little force. We shall "probably have an early occasion of allowing our readers to judge "how far our opinion is well founded as to the immortality that "awaits this great man."—*Morning Chronicle*, February 11, 1817.

Digitized by Google

the discomfort of some zealous whigs, who bored me for them (having heard it bruited by Mr. Davies that there were such matters) to no purpose; for, having written them solely with the notion that Mr. C. was the aggressor, and for *my own* and not party reprisals, I would not lend me to the zeal of any sect when I was made aware that he was not the writer of the offensive passages. *You know*, if there was such a thing, I would not deny it. I mentioned it openly at the time to you, and you will remember why and where I destroyed it; and no power nor wheedling on earth should have made, or could make, me (if I recollected them) give a copy after that, unless I was well assured that Mr. C. was really the author of that which you assured me he was not.

I intend for England this spring, where I have some affairs to adjust; but the post hurries me. For this month past I have been unwell, but am getting better, and thinking of moving homewards towards May, without going to Rome, as the unhealthy season comes on soon, and I can return when I have settled the business I go upon, which need not be long. You say that *Margaret of Anjou*[1] and *Ilderim*[2] do not keep pace with your other saleables. I should have thought the Assyrian tale very succeedable.

I saw, in Mr. Wedderburn Webster's poetry, that he had written my epitaph; I would rather have written his.

The thing I have sent you, you will see at a glimpse, could never be attempted or thought of for the stage; I much doubt it for publication even. It is too much in my old style; but I composed it actually with a *horror* of the stage, and with a view to render even the thought

1. *Margaret of Anjou, a Poem*, by Margaret Holford: 1816.
2. *Ilderim, a Syrian Tale*, by H. Gally Knight: 1816.

Digitized by Google

of it impracticable, knowing the zeal of my friends that I should try that for which I have an invincible repugnance, viz. a representation.

I certainly am a devil of a mannerist, and must leave off; but what could I do? Without exertion of some kind, I should have sunk under my imagination and reality. My best respects to Mr. Gifford, to Walter Scott, and to all friends.

Yours ever,

BYRON.

## 635.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, March 10, 1817.

I wrote again to you lately, but I hope you won't be sorry to have another epistle. I have been unwell this last month, with a kind of slow and low fever, which fixes upon me at night, and goes off in the morning; but, however, I am now better. In spring it is probable we may meet; at least I intend for England, where I have business, and hope to meet you in *your* restored health and additional laurels.

Murray has sent me the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh*. When I tell you that Walter Scott is the author of the article in the former, you will agree with me that such an article is still more honourable to him than to myself. I am perfectly pleased with Jeffrey's also, which I wish you to tell him, with my remembrances—not that I suppose it is of any consequence to him, or ever could have been, whether I am pleased or not, but simply in my private relation to him, as his well-wisher, and it may be one day as his acquaintance. I wish you would also add, what you know, that I was not, and, indeed, am not

Digitized by Google

even *now*, the misanthropical and gloomy gentleman [1] he takes me for, but a facetious companion, well to do with

1. In Byron's *Detached Thoughts* occurs the following passage: "People have wondered at the melancholy which runs through my "writings. Others have wondered at my personal gaiety. But I "recollect once, after an hour in which I had been sincerely and "particularly gay and rather brilliant, in company, my wife replying "to me when I said (upon her remarking my high spirits), 'And "yet, Bell, I have been called and miscalled melancholy—you must "have seen how falsely, frequently?'—'No, Byron,' she answered, "'it is not so: at heart you are the most melancholy of mankind; "and often when apparently gayest.'"

Sir Walter Scott (*Prose Works*, vol. iv. p. 359) says, "The "flashes of mirth, gaiety, indignation, or satirical dislike, which "frequently animated Lord Byron's countenance, might, during "an evening's conversation, be mistaken by a stranger for its "habitual expression, so easily and so happily was it formed for "them all; but those who had an opportunity of studying his "features for a length of time, and upon various occasions, both "of rest and emotion, will agree with us, that their proper language "was that of melancholy."

On the other hand, the following lines by Hobhouse point to another view of Byron:—

"A New Version of the 'Stanzas to ——'

(See Lord Byron's poem 'Though the Day of my Destiny's over.')

I.

"Dear *Byron* this humbug give over;
Never talk of decay or decline.
No mortal alive can discover
The cause of so causeless a whine.
My soul with thy griefs was acquainted,
But the devil a merit in me;
For Momus himself never painted
A livelier creature than thee.

II.

"When every one round thee is smiling
In hopes of a look or a nod,
'Tis you and not we are beguiling
In talking so doleful and odd.
No winds were at war with the ocean,
The tide and the breezes were fair;
If the billows caused any emotion,
'Twas one where the heart had no share.

Digitized by Google

those with whom I am intimate, and as loquacious and laughing as if I were a much cleverer fellow.

I suppose now I shall never be able to shake off my sables in public imagination, more particularly since my moral * * [Clytemnestra?] clove down my fame. However, nor that, nor more than that, has yet extinguished my spirit, which always rises with the rebound.

III.

"The voyage 'twixt Ostend and Dover
Your stomach would rather be better for,
And the veriest poet or lover
Can never be drowned but in metaphor.
You talk of your pangs. Heaven defend us!
'They may crush,' but you never will wince;
'They may torture'—the word is tremendous,
But the thing was abolished long since.

IV.

"Though a poet, you should not abuse us;
Though a wit, have a truce with your jokes;
Though you govern us all, yet excuse us
If we think there's enough of this hoax.
Though trusted, no creditors touch thee;
Though parted, 'tis but from thy wife;
Though wakeful, with Molly to much thee
'Tis not such a damnable life.

V.

"You blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many. Well done!
You serve the world right not to prize it,
That has left all her many for one;
If dearly that pref'rence has cost us,
One comfort we all may foresee,—
Whatever our choice may have lost us,
We're sure of fresh poems from thee.

VI.

"Though the stock of our verses hath perished,
No dearth, it appears, can befall,
Since the poet that most we have cherished
Bids fair to be longest of all.
Fresh Harolds for ever are springing;
In spite of his well, and his tree,
Our bard on the Brenta keeps singing
Of heroes mistaken for thee."

Digitized by Google

At Venice we are in Lent, and I have not lately moved out of doors, my feverishness requiring quiet, and —by way of being more quiet—here is the Signora Marianna just come in and seated at my elbow.

Have you seen * * *'s book of poesy? and, if you have seen it, are you not delighted with it? And have you—I really cannot go on: there is a pair of great black eyes looking over my shoulder, like the angel leaning over St. Matthew's, in the old frontispieces to the Evangelists,—so that I must turn and answer them instead of you.

Ever, etc.

## 636.—To John Hanson.

Venice, March 25, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I have been ill of a fever which prevented me from answering your letter. Tell Charles I have got his paper and will sign it, but I cannot find a witness at present, there being no English of my acquaintance here.

The answer of Lady B. and Co. is *no* answer: whatever be the event, I will try the *question* to the *last*, and I request you to get me the best advice how to proceed in Chancery, because I am determined to *reclaim* the *child* to myself as the natural guardian in consequence of their recent conduct. The last piece of treachery I little thought of, but the venom is obvious: but this shall not deter me from asserting my right. Get *this* Chancery *Bill*, answer it, and proceed upon it. I shall apply to have the child: in short, as they have begun, I will go on, come of it what will. I have done what I could to avoid extremities, but the die is cast, and I authorize and desire you to take the proper steps, and obtain for me

Digitized by Google

the best advice, how and in what manner to assume the care and personal charge of my daughter. I will return directly if necessary.

Mrs. B[n] of Nottingham[1] writes for her interest: if there is any residue from the rents, let her have what you can—her and Joe Murray, poor old man. Sir R. Noel's year being due, let him pay it.

I hope you are well, and doing well.

I quite approve of your diligence, and what you have already done on my daughter's account; but *I* must proceed.

Ever yours very truly and affectionately,

BYRON.

P.S.—As it was understood and assented that all legal proceedings on the part of Lady B. and the Noels were to terminate with our separation, Noel's Chancery Bill is an infraction of the understood relations between us, and you may tell him from me, he is *guilty* of a breach of his word. However, *on with* it; as they began, they shall have enough.

## 637.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, March 25, 1817.

I have at last learned, in default of your own writing (or *not* writing—which should it be? for I am not very clear as to the application of the word *default*), from Murray two particulars of (or belonging to) you; one, that you are removing to Hornsey, which is, I presume, to be nearer London; and the other, that your poem is announced by the name of *Lalla Rookh*. I am glad of it,—first that we are to have it at last, and next, I like

1. The Hon. Mrs. George Byron. See vol. i. p. 194, *note* 1; and p. 217, *note* 2.

Digitized by Google

a tough title myself—witness *The Giaour* and *Childe Harold*, which choked half the Blues [1] at starting. Besides, it is the tail of Alcibiades's dog,[2]—not that I suppose you

1. "Thou shalt not bear false witness like 'The Blues.'"
*Don Juan*, Canto I. stanza ccvi.

The name originated in Venice with a society of ladies and gentlemen, formed there in 1400, distinguished by the colour of the stockings worn by the members, and known as "Della Calza." The society lasted till 1590, when it appeared in Paris and became the rage among *les femmes savantes*. In England, "Blue Stocking" assemblies, as they were called in derision, began to be given, about 1750, by Mrs. Montagu, Lady Schaub, Mrs. Vesey, and Mrs. Ord. Their object was to substitute conversation for card-tables. Dr. Doran (*A Lady of the Last Century*, p. 270) quotes a letter from Mrs. Montagu, dated March, 1757, in which she speaks of Benjamin Stillingfleet, a frequent guest at the assemblies of literary ladies, as having "left off his old friends and blue stockings." According to Sir William Forbes (*ibid.*, p. 272), Admiral Boscawen was the first to call these literary assemblies Blue Stocking Societies, the name being suggested to him by Stillingfleet's dress.

2. "Alcibiades had a marvellous faire great dog, that cost him "threescore and ten minas, and he cut off his taile that was his chiefe "beauty. When his friends reproved him, and told him how every "man blamed him for it: he fell a laughing, and told them he had "that he sought. 'For,' saith he, 'I would have the Athenians "rather prate upon that, then they should say worse of me.'"—North's Translation of Plutarch's *Lives*, ed. 1631, p. 201.

Byron professed to think Alcibiades the greatest hero of antiquity. In his *Detached Thoughts* (1821) occurs a passage, on which Sir Walter Scott has added the following note:—

"One can scarcely help being much struck with Lord Byron's "choice of a favourite among the heroic names of antiquity. The "Man who was educated by Pericles, who commanded the admira-"tion as well as the affection of Socrates, whose gallantry and "boldness were always as undisputed as the pre-eminent graces of "his person and manners, who died at forty-five after having been "successively the delight and the hero of Athens, of Sparta, and of "Persia—this most versatile of great men has certainly left to the "world a very splendid reputation. But his fame is stained with "the recollections of a most profligate and debauched course of "private life, and of the most complete and flagrant contempt of all "public principle; and it is to be hoped that there are not many "who could gravely, like Lord Byron, give to the name of Alci-"biades a preference on the whole over such an one as that of an "Epaminondas or a Leonidas—or even of a Miltiades or an "Hannibal.

"But—the career of Alcibiades was *romantic*, and every great "event in which he had a share has the air of a personal adventure,

Digitized by Google

want either dog or tail. Talking of tail, I wish you had not called it a "*Persian Tale*."[1] Say a "Poem," or "Romance," but not "Tale." I am very sorry that I called some of my own things "Tales," because I think that they are something better. Besides, we have had Arabian, and Hindoo, and Turkish, and Assyrian Tales. But, after all, this is frivolous in me; you won't, however, mind my nonsense.

Really and truly, I want you to make a great hit, if only out of self-love, because we happen to be old cronies; and I have no doubt you will—I am sure you *can*. But you are, I'll be sworn, in a devil of a pucker; and *I* am *not* at your elbow, and Rogers *is*. I envy him; which is not fair, because he does not envy any body. Mind you send to me—that is, make Murray send—the moment you are forth.

I have been very ill with a slow fever, which at last took to flying, and became as quick as need be. But, at length, after a week of half-delirium, burning skin, thirst,

"and whatever might be said of his want of principle, moral and "political, nobody ever doubted the greatness of his powers or the "brilliancy of his accomplishments. By the gift of Nature the "handsomest creature of his time and the possessor of a very extra-"ordinary genius, he was by accident, or by fits, a soldier and a "hero and an orator, and even, it would seem, a philosopher; "but he played those parts only because he wished it to be thought "that there was no part which he could not play. He thought of "nothing but himself. His vanity entirely commanded the direction "of his genius, and could even make him abandon occasionally his "voluptuousness for the very opposite extreme: which last circum-"stance, by the way, was probably one of those that had hit Lord "Byron's fancy, as indeed it may be suspected to have influenced "his behaviour.

"Was he who selected Alcibiades from the great names of "Antiquity quite sincere when he proclaimed Washington his "modern Hero? Had Napoleon been a *Gentleman*, I suspect he "would have been the man."

1. Byron, says Moore (*Life*, p. 344), "had been misinformed on "this point—the work in question having been, from the first, "entitled an *Oriental Romance*."

Digitized by Google

hot headach, horrible pulsation, and no sleep, by the blessing of barley water, and refusing to see any physician, I recovered. It is an epidemic of the place, which is annual, and visits strangers. Here follow some versicles, which I made one sleepless night.

I read the "Christabel,"[1]
Very well:
I read the "Missionary";[2]
Pretty—very:
I tried at "Ilderim";[3]
Ahem!
I read a sheet of "Marg'ret of *Anjou*";[4]
*Can you?*
I turn'd a page of Webster's "Waterloo";[5]
Pooh! pooh!
I look'd at Wordsworth's milk-white "Rylstone Doe":[6]
Hillo!
I read "Glenarvon," too, by Caro. Lamb[7]—
God damn!

* * * * * * * *

I have not the least idea where I am going, nor what I am to do. I wished to have gone to Rome; but at present it is pestilent with English,—a parcel of staring boobies, who go about gaping and wishing to be at once cheap and magnificent. A man is a fool who travels

1. *Christabel, etc.*, by S. T. Coleridge: 1816. (See Byron's letter to Coleridge, *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 228, and *note* 1; also *ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 31, *note* 1.)
2. *The Missionary of the Andes, a Poem*, by W. L. Bowles: 1815.
3. *Ilderim, a Syrian Tale*, by H. Gally Knight: 1816.
4. *Margaret of Anjou, a Poem*, by Margaret Holford: 1816.
5. *Waterloo and other Poems*, by J. Wedderburn Webster: 1816.
6. *The White Doe of Rylstone, or the Fate of the Nortons, a Poem*, by W. Wordsworth: 1815.
7. *Glenarvon, a Novel* [by Lady Caroline Lamb]: 1816.

Digitized by Google

now in France or Italy, till this tribe of wretches is swept home again. In two or three years the first rush will be over, and the Continent will be roomy and agreeable.

I stayed at Venice chiefly because it is not one of their "dens of thieves;" and here they but pause and pass. In Switzerland it was really noxious. Luckily, I was early, and had got the prettiest place on all the Lake before they were quickened into motion with the rest of the reptiles. But they crossed me every where. I met a family of children and old women half-way up the Wengen Alp (by the Jungfrau) upon mules, some of them too old and others too young to be the least aware of what they saw.

By the way, I think the Jungfrau, and all that region of Alps, which I traversed in September—going to the very top of the Wengen, which is not the highest (the Jungfrau itself is inaccessible) but the best point of view —much finer than Mont-Blanc and Chamouni, or the Simplon. I kept a journal of the whole for my sister Augusta, part of which she copied and let Murray see.

I wrote a sort of mad Drama, for the sake of introducing the Alpine scenery in description: and this I sent lately to Murray. Almost all the *dram. pers.* are spirits, ghosts, or magicians, and the scene is in the Alps and the other world, so you may suppose what a Bedlam tragedy it must be: make him show it you. I sent him all three acts piecemeal, by the post, and suppose they have arrived.

I have now written to you at least six letters, or letter*ets*, and all I have received in return is a note about the length you used to write from Bury Street to St. James's Street, when we used to dine with Rogers, and talk laxly, and go to parties, and hear poor Sheridan now and then. Do you remember one night he was so

Digitized by Google

tipsy, that I was forced to put his cocked hat on for him, —for he could not,—and I let him down at Brookes's, much as he must since have been let down into his grave. Heigh ho! I wish I was drunk—but I have nothing but this damned barley-water before me.

I am still in love,—which is a dreadful drawback in quitting a place, and I can't stay at Venice much longer. What I shall do on this point I don't know. The girl means to go with me, but I do not like this for her own sake. I have had so many conflicts in my own mind on this subject, that I am not at all sure they did not help me to the fever I mentioned above. I am certainly very much attached to her, and I have cause to be so, if you knew all. But she has a child; and though, like all the "children of the sun," she consults nothing but passion, it is necessary I should think for both; and it is only the virtuous, like * * * *, who can afford to give up husband and child, and live happy ever after.

The Italian ethics are the most singular ever met with. The perversion, not only of action, but of reasoning, is singular in the women. It is not that they do not consider the thing itself as wrong, and very wrong, but *love* (the *sentiment* of love) is not merely an excuse for it, but makes it an *actual virtue*, provided it is disinterested, and not a *caprice*, and is confined to one object. They have awful notions of constancy; for I have seen some ancient figures of eighty pointed out as *Amorosi* of forty, fifty, and sixty years' standing. I can't say I have ever seen a husband and wife so coupled.

Ever, etc.

P.S.—Marianna, to whom I have just translated what I have written on our subject to you, says—"If you "loved me thoroughly, you would not make so many fine



Digitized by Google

"reflections, which are only good *forbirsi i scarpi*,"—that is, "to clean shoes withal,"—a Venetian proverb of appreciation, which is applicable to reasoning of all kinds.

## 638.—To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

Venice, March 25th 1817.

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,—I have had a fever which prevented me from writing. It was first slow, and then quick, and then it went away. I got well without a Physician: you will think it odd for me who am so fond of *quacking;* but on this occasion, though bad enough, I would see none, and refused to see one who was sent for by Madame Segati on purpose; and so I got well. I had the *slow* one upon me some time ago, but I thought it better to say nothing to you till I recovered altogether. . . . . .

So you have seen Holmes. By the way, owing to some foolery of Scrope's, he had cut my hair in his picture (not quite so well as Blake). I desired him to restore it: pray make him do so, or see that he has done so. He may send his print in a letter if he likes, unless you see it and don't like it.

I have been sitting for *two* miniatures for *you;* one the view of the face which you like, and the other different, but *both* in my *usual* dress; and as they are the only ones so done, I hope you will like them. The Painter is an Italian named Prepiani, reckoned very good: he made some fine ones of the Viceroy Eugene. I will send or bring them.

You amuse me with Le Mann's Marquis's message—a pretty compliment! to set a sick man *asleep;* however I am glad to have done the old gentleman any good.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

[illegible] good *forbini i scarpi*," —
[illegible]"—a Venetian prov[illegible]
[illegible] applicable to reasoning of [illegible]

[illegible] Hon. Augusta Leigh.

Venice, March 2[illegible] 1817.

[illegible]USTA,—I have had a fever which [illegible] writing. It was first slow, and then [illegible] went away. I got well without a [illegible] will think it odd for me who am so fond [illegible] this occasion, though bad enough [illegible], and refused to see one who was sent [illegible] Mr. [illegible] Segati on purpose, and so I got well. [illegible] one upon me some time ago, but I [illegible] better to say nothing to you till I recovered [illegible]

[illegible] Holmes. By the way, owing to [illegible] Scrope's, he had cut my hair in his [illegible] so well as Blake). I desired him to [illegible] him do so, or see that he has done so. [illegible] print in a letter if he likes, unless you [illegible] like it.

I [illegible] sitting for *two* miniatures for *you*; one the view of the face which you like, and the other different, but *both* in my *usual* dress; and as they are the only ones so done, I hope you will like them. The Painter is an Italian named Prepiani, reckoned very good; he made some fine ones of the Viceroy Eugene. I will send or bring them.

You amuse me with Le Mann's Marquis's message—a pretty compliment! to see a sick man *asleep*; however [illegible] glad to have done the old gentleman any good.

Digitized by Google

The Hon.ble Augusta Leigh

from a drawing by T. C. Wageman, in the possession of Mr. E.W. Howell.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Believe me (in total ignorance of "P.P." of which I really know nothing),

Yours ever very truly and affect^ly,

B.

## 639.—To John Murray.

Venice, March 25, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter and enclosure are safe; but "English gentlemen" are very rare—at least in Venice. I doubt whether there are at present any, save the Consul[1] and vice-Consul, with neither of whom I have

1. Richard Belgrave Hoppner (1786–1872), second son of John Hoppner, R.A. (1758–1810), originally intended to be an artist, and studied painting. In 1801, as a guest of the admiral, he was present at the Battle of Copenhagen. From a sketch made off the coast of Holland as he was going out, he painted a picture called *Sea View and Shipping*, formerly in the possession of Sir J. Leicester. He was also present at the British blockade of Cadiz in January, 1805. In 1813 he published a translation from the German of A. J. von Krusenstern's *Voyage round the World in the Years* 1803–1806. Hoppner was appointed English Consul at Venice in October, 1814. Samuel Rogers, writing, January 29, 1809, to Moore (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. viii. pp. 70, 71), mentions that Hoppner had been sent to him by Gifford to consult him on the foundation of the *Quarterly Review*, and to endeavour to secure for the new periodical the services of Moore. Shelley speaks of Mrs. Hoppner as "a "most agreeable and amiable lady" (Letter to Mrs. Shelley, August 23, 1818, *Prose Works*, ed. H. Buxton Forman, vol. iv. p. 33). Again, he says that the Hoppners are the "most amiable "people I ever knew. Do you know that they have put off a "journey of pleasure solely that they might devote themselves to "this affair, and all with so much ease, delicacy, tenderness! They "are much attached to each other, and have a nice little boy, seven "months old. Mr. Hoppner paints beautifully: and this excur- "sion, which he has just put off, was an expedition to the Julian "Alps, in the neighbourhood, for the sake of sketching, to procure "winter employment. He has only a fortnight's leisure, and he has "sacrificed two days to strangers whom he never saw before. Mrs. "Hoppner has hazel eyes and sweet looks—rather Maryish" (Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, vol. ii. p. 227). In another letter, to Peacock, October 8, 1818 (*Prose Works*, vol. iv. p. 39), Shelley writes, "We "made a very delightful acquaintance there with a Mr. and Mrs. "Hoppner, the gentleman an Englishman, and the lady a Swissesse, "mild and beautiful, and unprejudiced in the best sense of the

Digitized by Google

the slightest acquaintance. The moment I can pounce upon a witness, I will send the deed properly signed: but must he necessarily be genteel? Would not a Servant or a merchant do? Venice is not a place where the English are gregarious; their pigeon-houses are Florence, Naples, Rome, etc.; and to tell you the truth, this was one reason why I staid here—till the season of the purgation of Rome from these people—which is infected with them at this time—should arrive. Besides, I abhor the nation, and the nation me; it is impossible for me to describe my *own* sensation on that point, but it may suffice to say, that, if I met with any of the race in the beautiful parts of Switzerland, the most distant glimpse or aspect of them poisoned the whole scene, and I do not choose to have the Pantheon, and St. Peter's, and the Capitol, spoiled for me too. This feeling may be probably owing to recent events, and the destruction with which my moral Clytemnestra hewed me down; but it does not exist the less, and while it exists, I shall conceal it as little as any other.

I have been seriously ill with a fever, but it is gone. I had no physician. I believe or suppose it was the indigenous fever of the place, which comes every year at this time, and of which the Physicians change the name annually, to dispatch the people sooner. It is a kind of Typhus,[1] and kills occasionally. It was pretty smart, but nothing particular, and has left me some debility and a

"word. The kind attentions of these people made our short stay at "Venice very pleasant." Byron had a great respect for Hoppner. "He was," said Byron to Lady Blessington (*Conversations*, p. 135), "a good listener, and his remarks were acute and original; he is "besides a thoroughly good man, and I know he was in earnest "when he gave me his opinions." Hoppner died August 6, 1872, at Turin (*Times*, August 13, 1872).

1. For Hoppner's report to Lord Castlereagh on the plague in Venice, see *Annual Register*, 1818, p. 153.

Digitized by Google

great appetite. There are a good many ill at present, I suppose, of the same.

I feel sorry for Horner,[1] if there was any thing in the world to make him like it; and still more sorry for his friends, as there was much to make them regret him. I had not heard of his death till by your letter.

Some weeks ago I wrote to you my acknowledgments of W[alter] S[cott]'s article. Now I know it to be his, it cannot add to my good opinion of him, but it adds to that of myself. *He*, and Gifford, and Moore, are the only *regulars* I ever knew who had nothing of the *Garrison* about their manner: no nonsense, nor affectations, look you! As for the rest whom I have known, there was always more or less of the author about them—the pen peeping from behind the ear, and the thumbs a little inky, or so.

*Lalla Rookh*—you must recollect that, in the way of title, *The Giaour*[2] has never been pronounced to this day; and both it and *Childe Harold* sounded very formidable and facetious to the blue-bottles of wit and honour about town, till they were taught and startled into a proper deportment; and therefore *Lalla Rookh*, which is very orthodox and oriental, is as good a title as need be, if not better. I could wish rather that he had not called it "a *Persian tale;*" firstly, because we have had Turkish tales, and Hindoo tales, and Assyrian tales, already; and *tale* is a word of which it repents me to have nicknamed poesy. "Fable" would be better; and, secondly, "Persian "tale" reminds one of the lines of Pope on Ambrose

1. Francis Horner (see *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 353, *note* 4) died at Pisa, February 8, 1817. Dr. Polidori, who was studying at Pisa, was one of his attendants.

2. In Miss Austen's *Persuasion* (ch. xi.) Anne Elliot and Captain Benwick discuss "how ranked the *Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos*, "and, moreover, how the *Giaour* was to be pronounced."

Digitized by Google

Phillips;[1] though no one can say, to be sure, that this tale has been "turned for half-a-crown;" still it is as well to avoid such clashings. "Persian *story*"—why not?—or romance? I feel as anxious for Moore as I could do for myself, for the soul of me, and I would not have him succeed otherwise than splendidly, which I trust he will do.

With regard to the "witch drama," I sent all the three acts by post, week after week, within this last month. I repeat that I have not an idea if it is good or bad. If bad, it must, on no account, be risked in publication; if good, it is at your service. I value it at *three hundred* guineas, or less, if you like it. Perhaps, if published, the best way will be to add it to your winter volume, and not publish separately. The price will show you I don't pique myself upon it; so speak out. You may put it in the fire, if you like, and Gifford *don't* like.

The Armenian Grammar is published—that is, *one;* the other is still in MS. My illness has prevented me from moving this month past, and I have done nothing more with the Armenian.

Of Italian or rather Lombard manners, I could tell you little or nothing. I went two or three times to the Governor's Conversazione, (and if you go once, you are free to go always,) at which, as I only saw very plain women,—a formal circle, in short a *worse sort* of rout, I did not go again. I went to some Academie and to Madame Albrizzi's, where I saw pretty much the same thing, with the addition of some literati, who are the same—*blue* by God! all the world over. I fell in love

1. Ambrose Philips (*circa* 1675-1749) translated, in 1709, the *Contes Persans* of Petit de la Croix. Pope attacked him in his *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* (line 179, *et seqq.*)—

"The bard whom pilfer'd Pastorals renown,
Who turns a Persian tale for half-a-crown," etc., etc.

Digitized by Google

the first week with Madame Segati, and I have continued so ever since, because she is very pretty and pleasing, and talks Venetian, which amuses me, and is naïve, and I can besides see her, and make love with her at all or any hours, which is convenient with my temperament.

I have seen all their spectacles and sights, but I do not know anything very worthy of observation except that the women *kiss* better than those of any other nation, which is notorious, and is attributed to the worship of images and the early habit of osculation induced thereby.

Very truly yours,

B.

P.S.—Pray send the red tooth-powder by a *safe hand* and speedily.[1]

To hook the Reader, you, John Murray,
Have published "Anjou's Margaret,"
Which won't be sold off in a hurry,
(At least, it has not been as yet);
And then, still further to bewilder him,
Without remorse you set up "Ilderim;"
So mind you don't get into debt,—
Because—as how—if you should fail,
These books would be but baddish bail.
And mind you do *not* let escape
These rhymes to *Morning Post* or Perry,
Which would be *very* treacherous—*very*,
And get me into such a scrape!
For, firstly, I should have to sally,
All in my little boat, against a *Galley;*

1. Here follow the same rhymes ("I read the Christabel," etc.) which have already been given on p. 79.

Digitized by Google

And, should I chance to slay the Assyrian wight,
Have next to combat with the female knight.
And pricked to death expire upon her needle,
A sort of end which I should take indeed ill!

You may show these matters to Moore and the *select*, but not to the *prophane;* and tell Moore that I wonder he don't write to me now and then.

## 640.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, March 31, 1817.

You will begin to think my epistolary offerings (to whatever altar you please to devote them) rather prodigal. But until you answer, I shall not abate, because you deserve no better. I know you are well, because I hear of your voyaging to London and the environs, which I rejoice to learn, because your note alarmed me by the purgation and phlebotomy therein prognosticated. I also hear of your being in the press; all which, methinks, might have furnished you with subject-matter for a middle-sized letter, considering that I am in foreign parts, and that the last month's advertisements and obituary would be absolute news to me from your Tramontane country.

I told you, in my last, I have had a smart fever. There is an epidemic in the place; but I suspect, from the symptoms, that mine was a fever of my own, and had nothing in common with the low, vulgar typhus, which is at this moment decimating Venice, and which has half unpeopled Milan, if the accounts be true. This malady has sorely discomfited my serving men, who want sadly to be gone away, and get me to remove. But, besides my natural perversity, I was seasoned in Turkey, by the continual whispers of the plague, against apprehensions

Digitized by Google

of contagion. Besides which, apprehension would not prevent it; and then I am still in love, and "forty thou-"sand" fevers should not make me stir before my minute, while under the influence of that paramount delirium. Seriously speaking, there is a malady rife in the city—a dangerous one, they say. However, mine did not appear so, though it was not pleasant.

This is Passion-week—and twilight—and all the world are at vespers. They have an eternal churching, as in all Catholic countries, but are not so bigoted as they seem to be in Spain.

I don't know whether to be glad or sorry that you are leaving Mayfield. Had I ever been at Newstead during your stay there, (except during the winter of 1813–14, when the roads were impracticable,) we should have been within hail, and I should like to have made a giro of the Peak with you. I know that country well, having been all over it when a boy. Was you ever in Dovedale? I can assure you there are things in Derbyshire as noble as Greece or Switzerland. But you had always a lingering after London, and I don't wonder at it. I liked it as well as any body, myself, now and then.

Will you remember me to Rogers? whom I presume to be flourishing, and whom I regard as our poetical papa. You are his lawful son, and I the illegitimate. Has he begun yet upon Sheridan?[1] If you see our republican friend, Leigh Hunt, pray present my remembrances. I saw about nine months ago that he was in a row (like my friend Hobhouse) with the Quarterly Reviewers. For my part, I never could understand these quarrels of authors with critics and with one

1. Moore's *Life of Sheridan*, a work in which (see his Diary for October 18–22, 1818, *Memoirs, etc.*, vol. ii. pp. 191–200) he received considerable help from Rogers, was published in October, 1825.

Digitized by Google

another. "For God's sake, gentlemen, what do they "mean?"

What think you of your countryman, Maturin? I take some credit to myself for having done my best to bring out *Bertram;* but I must say my colleagues were quite as ready and willing. Walter Scott, however, was the *first* who mentioned him, which he did to me, with great commendation, in 1815; and it is to this casualty, and two or three other accidents, that this very clever fellow owed his first and well-merited public success. What a chance is fame!

Did I tell you that I have translated two Epistles?—a correspondence between St. Paul and the Corinthians, not to be found in our version, but the Armenian—but which seems to me very orthodox, and I have done it into scriptural prose English.[1]

Ever, etc.

1. For Byron's translation, see Appendix I.

"The translation by Lord Byron is, as far as I can learn, the first "that has ever been attempted in English; and as, proceeding from "*his* pen, it must possess, of course, additional interest, the reader "will not be displeased to find it in the Appendix. Annexed to "the copy in my possession are the following words in his own "handwriting: 'Done into English by me, January, February, "'1817, at the Convent of San Lazaro, with the aid and exposition "of the Armenian text by the Father Paschal Aucher, Armenian "friar.—BYRON. I had also' (he adds) 'the Latin text, but it is in "many places very corrupt, and with great omissions'" (Moore).

The Epistles were discovered in an Armenian MS. in the possession of Gilbert North; first mentioned by John Gregory and Usher (Fabricius, *Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti*, vol. ii. pp. 920, 921); published by the two Whistons in their edition of *Moses Chorenensis* (1736) in an "Appendix Literaturæ Armenicæ" (p. 369), "quæ Continet epistolas duas, Primam Corinthiorum ad Paulum "Apostolum, Alteram Pauli Apostoli ad Corinthios, nunc primum "ex Codice MS. Armenico integrè plenèque editas et Græcè "Latinèque versas." "The last and most complete translation," says Stanley (Appendix to the *Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. 1858, p. 609), "is that made jointly by Lord Byron "and Father Pasquale Aucher, of the Armenian Monastery of St. "Lazarus at Venice from MSS. in that convent." In the Armenian Church the Epistles are regarded as canonical books (Curzon's *Armenia*, p. 225).

Digitized by Google

## 641.—To John Murray.

Venice, April 2, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I sent you the whole of the Drama at *three several* times, act by act, in separate covers. I hope that you have, or will receive, some or the whole of it.

So Love has a conscience. By Diana! I shall make him take back the box, though it were Pandora's. The discovery of its intrinsic silver occurred on sending it to have the lid adapted to admit Marianna's portrait. Of course I had the box remitted *in statu quo*, and had the picture set in another, which suits it (the picture) very well. The defaulting box is not touched, hardly,—it was not in the man's hands above an hour.

I am aware of what you say of Otway;[1] and am a very great admirer of his,—all except of that maudlin bitch of chaste lewdness and blubbering curiosity, Belvidera, whom I utterly despise, abhor, and detest; but the story of Marino Falieri is different, and, I think, so much finer, that I wish Otway had taken it instead: the head conspiring against the body for refusal of redress for a

1. Otway's *Venice Preserved, or a Plot Discovered*, was produced at the theatre in Dorset Gardens in February, 1681–82, with Mrs. Barry as "Belvidera," and Betterton as "Jaffeir." The play is founded on St. Réal's account of the conspiracy of the Marquis of Bedmar and the Duke of Ossuna against the Republic in 1618. Belvidera, daughter of Priuli, a Venetian senator, marries Jaffeir against the will of her father; but when Jaffeir joins Pierre in the conspiracy against the Senate, she persuades him to reveal the plot to Priuli. Jaffeir is pardoned, the others are condemned to death by torture; but, to save Pierre from the scaffold and the wheel, Jaffeir kills him, and then himself—

> "Jaffeir, upon the scaffold, to prevent
> A shameful death, stabb'd Pierre, and next himself;
> Both fell together."
>
> Act v. sc. 3.

"Belvidera" was a favourite part of Mrs. Siddons, who played it at Covent Garden, November 17, 1803, to Kemble's "Jaffeir" and Cooke's "Pierre."

Digitized by Google

real injury,—jealousy—treason, with the more fixed and inveterate passions (mixed with policy) of an old or elderly man—the devil himself could not have a finer subject, and he is your only tragic dramatist.

Voltaire has asked *why* no woman has ever written even a tolerable tragedy? "Ah (said the Patriarch) "the composition of a tragedy requires * * * [a "man]." If this be true, Lord knows what Joanna Baillie does; * * * * *

There is still, in the Doge's Palace, the black veil painted over Falieri's picture, and the staircase whereon he was first crowned Doge, and subsequently decapitated. This was the thing that most struck my imagination in Venice—more than the Rialto, which I visited for the sake of Shylock; and more, too, than Schiller's "*Armenian*,"[1] a novel which took a great hold of me

1. In the opening chapter of Schiller's *Geisterseher*, "Count "O——'s narrative," translated in Roscoe's *German Novelists* (vol. iii., 1826) as *The Ghost-seer*, occurs the following passage: "We sat down upon a stone bench, and expected that the mask "would pass by. He came straight towards us, and took his seat "very close by the side of the Prince, who drew out his watch and "said, rather loud, in French, rising at the same time from his seat, "'Nine—come! we forget that they wait for us at the *Louvre*.' "This was only a pretence to deceive the mask as to our route. "'Nine!' repeated the mask, in the same language, very expres- "sively and slowly. 'Wish yourself joy, Prince' (whilst he called "him by his right name); '*at nine o'clock he died*.'" The mask is also called the "mysterious Armenian." Two English translations of the novel had already appeared: (1) *The Ghost-seer, or Apparitionist*, by D. Boileau, in 1795; (2) *The Armenian, or the Ghost-seer, a History founded on Fact*, by W. Render, 4 vols., London, 1800, 12mo. The catastrophe of Byron's juvenile poem, "Oscar of Alva" (*Poems*, ed. 1898, vol. i. p. 131), is probably founded on Schiller's *Geisterseher*.

Compare with Byron's quotation from *The Ghost-seer* Rogers' *Italy*, "St. Mark's Place:"—

> "Who answer'd me just now? Who, when I said,
> "'*Tis nine*,' turn'd round and said so solemnly,
> '*Signor, he died at nine!*'—'Twas the Armenian;
> The mask that follows thee, go where thou wilt."

Digitized by Google

when a boy. It is also called the "Ghost Seer," and I never walked down St. Mark's by moonlight without thinking of it, and "*at nine o'clock he died!*"—But I hate things *all fiction*; and therefore the *Merchant* and *Othello* have no great associations to me: but *Pierre* has. There should always be some foundation of fact for the most airy fabric, and pure invention is but the talent of a liar.

Maturin's tragedy.[1]—By your account of him last year to me, he seemed a bit of a coxcomb, personally. Poor fellow! to be sure, he had had a long seasoning of adversity, which is not so hard to bear as t'other thing. I hope that this won't throw him back into the "slough "of Despond." Let him take heart—"whom the Lord "loveth he chasteneth; blessed be the name of the "Lord!" This sentence, by the way, is a contrast to the other one of *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat*, which may be thus done into English:—

"God maddens him whom 'tis his will to lose,
And gives the choice of death or phrenzy—choose."

You talk of "marriage;"—ever since my own funeral, the word makes me giddy, and throws me into a cold sweat. Pray, don't repeat it.

Tell me that Walter Scott is better; I would not have him ill for the world. I suppose it was by sympathy that I had my fever at the same time. I joy in the success of your *Quarterly;* but I must still stick by the *Edinburgh*. Jeffrey has done so by me, I must say, through everything, and this is more than I deserved from him. I have more than once acknowledged to you by letter the "Article" (and articles); say that you have

1. Maturin's second tragedy, *Manuel*, produced at Drury Lane, March 8, 1817, with Kean as "Manuel, Count Valdi," failed, and after five nights was withdrawn.

Digitized by Google

received the said letters, as I do not otherwise know what letters arrive. Both reviews came, but nothing more. M[aturin]'s play, and the extract not yet come.

There have been two articles in the Venice papers, one a Review of C. Lamb's *Glenarvon*, (whom may it please the beneficent Giver of all Good to damn in the next world! as she has damned herself in this) with the account of her scratching attempt at *Canicide* (at Lady Heathcote's), and the other a Review of *Childe Harold*, in which it proclaims me the most rebellious and contumacious admirer of Buonaparte now surviving in Europe. Both these articles are translations from the Literary Gazette of German Jena. I forgot to mention them at the time; they are some weeks old. They actually mentioned Caro: Lamb and her *mother's* name at full length. I have conserved these papers as curiosities.

Write to say whether or no my Magician has arrived, with all his scenes, spells, etc.

Yours ever,

B.

P.S.—Will you tell Mr. Kinnaird that the two recent letters I wrote to him were, owing to a mistake of a booby of a Partner of Siri and Wilhalm (the Bankers here), and that one of them called this morning to say all was right—and that there was no occasion for a further letter; however, heaven knows whether they are right or not. I hope I shall not have the same bother at Rome.

You should close with Madame de Stael.[1] This will

1. Madame de Staël's *Considérations sur la Révolution Française* was offered to Murray by the Baron de Staël in June, 1816 (*Memoir of John Murray*, vol. i. p. 316), and the sum of £4000 was asked for the work. During the negotiations, Madame de Staël died (July 14, 1817), and the book was eventually published by Messrs. Baldwin and Cradock.

Digitized by Google

be her best work, and permanently historical; it is on her father, the Revolution, and Buonaparte, etc. Bonstetten told me in Switzerland it was *very great*. I have not seen it myself, but the author often. She was very kind to me at Copet.

I like your delicacy—*you* who print *Margaret*—and *Ilderim* and then demur at Corinne. The failure of poor M's play will be a cordial to the aged heart of Saul,[1] who has been "kicking against the pricks" of the managers so long and so vainly—they ought to act his *Ivan;* as for Kean he is an "*infidus Scurra*," and his conduct on this occasion is of a piece with all one ever heard of him. Pray look after *Mr. S^t Aubin*. He is an Oxonian. It is very odd and something more than negligent that he has not consigned the letters, etc.; it was his own offer.

It is useless to send to the *Foreign Office:* nothing arrives to me by that conveyance. I suppose some zealous clerk thinks it a Tory duty to prevent it.

## 642.—To Samuel Rogers.

Venice, April 4, 1817.

MY DEAR ROGERS,—It is a considerable time since I wrote to you last, and I hardly know why I should trouble you now, except that I think you will not be sorry to hear from me now and then. You and I were never correspondents, but always something better, which is, very good friends.

I saw your friend Sharpe in Switzerland, or rather in the Genevan *territory* (which is and is not Switzerland), and he gave Hobhouse and me a very good route for the

1. Sotheby, whose *Saul: a Poem in Two Parts*, was published in 1807, London, 4to.

Digitized by Google

Bernese Alps; however, we took another from a German, and went by Clarens, the Dent de Jaman to Montbovon, and through the Simmenthal to Thoun, and so on to Lauterbrunnen; except that from thence to the Grindelwald, instead of round about, we went right over the Wengren Alp's very summit, and being close under the Jungfrau, saw it, its glaciers, and heard the avalanches in all their glory, having famous weather there*for*. We of course went from the Grindelwald over the Scheideck to Brienz and its lake; past the Reichenbach and all that mountain road, which reminded me of Albania and Ætolia and Greece, except that the people here were more civilised and rascally. I do not think so very much of Chamouni (except the source of the Arveyron, to which we went up to the teeth of the ice, so as to look into and touch the cavity, against the warning of the guides, only one of whom would go with us so close), as of the Jungfrau and the Pissevache, and Simplon, which are quite out of all mortal computation.

I was at Milan about a moon, and saw Monti and some other living curiosities, and thence on to Verona, where I did not forget your story of the assassination during your sojourn there, and brought away with me some fragments of Juliet's tomb, and a lively recollection of the amphitheatre. The Countess Goetz (the governor's wife here) told me that there is still a ruined castle of the Montecchi between Verona and Vicenza. I have been at Venice since November, but shall proceed to Rome shortly. For my deeds here, are they not written in my letters to the unreplying Thomas Moore? to him I refer you: he has received them all, and not answered one.

Will you remember me to Lord and Lady Holland? I have to thank the former for a book which I have not yet received, but expect to reperuse with great pleasure

Digitized by Google

on my return, viz. the second edition of *Lope de Vega*.[1] I have heard of Moore's forthcoming poem: he cannot wish himself more success than I wish and augur for him. I have also heard great things of *Tales of my Landlord*,[2] but I have not yet received them; by all accounts they beat even *Waverley*, etc., and are by the same author. Maturin's second tragedy has, it seems, failed, for which I should think any body would be sorry, except perhaps Sotheby, who, I must say, was capriciously and evilly entreated by the Sub-Committee about poor dear *Ivan*, whose lot can only be paralleled by that of his original—I don't mean the author, who is anything but original,—but the deposed imperial infant who gave his name and some narrative to the drama thereby entitled. My health was very victorious till within the last month, when I had a fever. There is a Typhus in these parts, but I don't think it was that. However, I got well without a Physician or drugs.

I forgot to tell you that, last autumn, I furnished Lewis with "bread and salt" for some days at Diodati, in reward for which (besides his conversation) he translated Goethe's *Faust* to me by word of mouth, and I set him by the ears with Madame de Stael about the slave-trade. I am indebted for many and kind courtesies to our Lady of Copet, and I now love her as much as I always did her works, of which I was and am a great admirer. When are you to begin with Sheridan? What are you doing, and how do you do?

Ever and very truly and affectionately yours,

B.

1. *Some Account of the Life and Writings of Lope Felix de Vega Carpio*, which had appeared anonymously in 1807, was republished with Lord Holland's name in 1817.

2. *Tales of my Landlord, collected and arranged by Jedediah Cleishbotham: The Black Dwarf, Old Mortality* (1817).



Digitized by Google

## 643.—To John Murray.

Venice, April 9, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Your letters of the 18th and 20th are arrived. In my own I have given you the rise, progress, decline, and fall of my recent malady. It is *gone* to the Devil: I won't pay him so bad a compliment as to say it *came* from him;—*he* is too much of a Gentleman. It was nothing but a slow fever, which quickened its pace towards the end of its journey. I had been bored with it some weeks—with nocturnal burnings and morning perspirations; but I am quite well again, which I attribute to having had neither medicine nor Doctor thereof.

In a few days I set off for Rome: such is my purpose. I shall change it very often before Monday next, but do you continue to direct and address to *Venice*, as heretofore. If I go, letters will be forwarded: I say "*if*," because I never know what I shall do till it is done; and as I mean most firmly to set out for Rome, it is not unlikely I may find myself at St. Petersburg.

You tell me to "take care of myself;"—faith, and I will. I won't be posthumous yet, if I can help it. Notwithstanding, only think what a "Life and Adventures," while I am in full scandal, would be worth, together with the *membra* of my writing-desk, the sixteen beginnings of poems never to be finished! Do you think I would not have shot myself last year, had I not luckily recollected that Mrs. Clermont, and Lady Noel, and all the old women in England would have been delighted;—besides the agreeable "Lunacy," of the "Crowner's Quest," and the regrets of two or three or half a dozen? Be assured that I *would live* for two reasons, or more;—there are one or two people whom I have to put out of the world, and as many into it, before

Digitized by Google

I can "depart in peace;" if I do so before, I have not fulfilled my mission. Besides, when I turn thirty, I will turn devout; I feel a great vocation that way in Catholic churches, and when I hear the organ.

So Webster is writing again![1] Is there no Bedlam in Scotland? nor thumb-screw? nor gag? nor handcuff? I went upon my knees to him almost, some years ago, to prevent him from publishing a political pamphlet, which would have given him a livelier idea of "Habeas "Corpus" than the world will derive from his present production upon that suspended subject, which will doubtless be followed by the suspension of other (his Majesty's) subjects.

I condole with Drury Lane, and rejoice with Sotheby, —that is, in a modest way,—on the tragical end of the new tragedy.

You and Leigh Hunt[2] have quarrelled then, it seems? I introduce him and his poem to you, in the hope that (*malgré* politics) the union would be beneficial to both, and the end is eternal enmity; and yet I did this with the best intentions: I introduce Coleridge and *Christabel*, and Coleridge runs away with your money; my friend Hobhouse quarrels, too, with the *Quarterly:* and (except the last) I am the innocent Istmhus (damn the word! I can't spell it, though I have crossed that of Corinth a dozen times) of these enmities.

I will tell you something about Chillon.—A Mr. *De Luc*, ninety years old, a Swiss, had it read to him, and is pleased with it,—so my sister writes. He said that he

1. Murray, in a letter to Byron, dated March 20, 1817 (*Memoir, etc.*, vol. i. p. 383), writes, "Wedderburn Webster is again at "work; he is composing a pamphlet on the subject of the recent "suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act."

2. Murray, writing to Byron (March 8, 1817), says, "I could "not buy, 'my dear Lord' Hunt's *Rimini;* and he abuses me "like a pickpocket."

Digitized by Google

was *with Rousseau* at *Chillon*, and that the description is perfectly correct. But this is not all: I recollected something of the name, and find the following passage in *The Confessions*, vol. 3, page 247. liv. 8th:—

"De tous ces amusemens celui qui me plût davantage "fut une promenade autour du Lac, que je fis en bateau "avec *De Luc* père, sa bru, ses *deux fils*, et ma Thérèse. "Nous mîmes sept jours à cette tournée par le plus beau "temps du monde. J'en gardai le vif souvenir des sites "qui m'avoient frappé à l'autre extrémité du Lac, et dont "je fis la description, quelques années après, dans la "Nouvelle Héloise."

This nonagenarian, De Luc,[1] must be one of the *deux fils*. He is in England—infirm, but still in faculty. It is odd that he should have lived so long, and not wanting in oddness that he should have made this voyage with Jean Jacques, and afterwards, at such an interval, read a poem by an Englishman (who had made precisely the same circumnavigation) upon the same scenery.

As for *Manfred*, it is of no use sending *proofs*; nothing of that kind comes. I sent the whole at different times. The 2 first acts are the best; the third so so: but I was blown with the first and second heats. You must call it "a poem," for it is *no drama*, and I do not choose to have it called by so Sotheby-ish a name—a "poem in "dialogue," or—Pantomime, if you will; any thing but a green-room Synonime; and this is your motto—

> "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Yours ever,

B.

1. John Andrè de Luc, born at Geneva in 1727, died at Windsor in November, 1817. He was appointed, in 1773, reader to Queen Charlotte. He made some discoveries in connection with barometers and thermometers, and published several works on geology and geological travel.

Digitized by Google

My love and thanks to Mr. G[ifford].

Don't forget my tooth powder; its of no use to send it by the damned and double damned conveyances, but by some private hand—by Mr. Kinnaird,—or Mr. Davies if they come out,—or any body. Let it be left at my bankers here, Siri and Wilhalm. I mean to be in Venice again in July.

*Nothing yet* whatever from the foreign office. Why do you send anything to such a "den of thieves" as that?

## 644.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, April 11, 1817.

I shall continue to write to you while the fit is on me, by way of penance upon you for your former complaints of long silence. I dare say you would blush, if you could, for not answering. Next week I set out for Rome. Having seen Constantinople, I should like to look at t'other fellow. Besides, I want to see the Pope, and shall take care to tell him that I vote for the Catholics and no Veto.[1]

I sha'n't go to Naples. It is but the second best sea-view, and I have seen the first and third, viz. Constantinople and Lisbon, (by the way, the last is but a river-view; however, they reckon it after Stamboul and Naples, and before Genoa,) and Vesuvius is silent, and I have passed by Ætna. So I shall e'en return to Venice in July; and if you write, I pray you to address to Venice, which is my head, or rather my *heart*, quarters.

My late physician, Dr. Polidori, is here on his way to England, with the present Lord Guilford[2] and the widow

1. It was proposed to couple the measure of Catholic Emancipation in Ireland with a veto on the appointment of Roman Catholic bishops.

2. Frederick North, fifth Earl of Guilford (1766–1827), third

Digitized by Google

of the late earl.[1] Dr. Polidori has, just now, no more patients, because his patients are no more. He had lately three, who are now all dead—one embalmed. Horner and a child of Thomas Hope's are interred at Pisa and Rome. Lord Guilford died of an inflammation of the bowels: so they took them out, and sent them (on account of their discrepancies), separately from the carcass, to England. Conceive a man going one way, and his intestines another, and his immortal soul a third! —was there ever such a distribution? One certainly has a soul; but how it came to allow itself to be enclosed in a body is more than I can imagine. I only know if once mine gets out, I'll have a bit of a tussle before I let it get in again to that or any other.

And so poor dear Mr. Maturin's second tragedy has been neglected by the discerning public! Sotheby will be damned glad of this, and damned without being glad, if ever his own plays come upon "any stage."

I wrote to Rogers the other day, with a message for you. I hope that he flourishes. He is the Tithonus

and youngest son of George the Third's Prime Minister, was an enthusiastic philhellene. Received into the Greek Church at Corfu (January, 1791), he acted as Secretary (1795–6) to the Viceroy of Corsica, and was Governor of Ceylon (1798–1805). He was the originator and first Archon of the Ionian University in Corfu (May, 1824), which he enriched with money and books. He died at Lord Sheffield's house in St. James's Square, October 14, 1827. A letter from Corfu (November 20, 1827), giving an account of the general mourning with which the news of his death was received, is printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1827 (part ii. p. 648). "I "also made the acquaintance," writes Sir Gilbert Elliot, in 1788 (*Life*, vol. i. p. 235), "of Frederick North, the invalid, who is the "only pleasant son of the family, and he is very remarkably so."

1. Francis North, who succeeded his elder brother, in 1802, as fourth Earl of Guilford, was the second son of Lord North. He married, in 1810, Maria, fifth daughter of Thomas Boycott, of Rudge Hall, Salop. Fond of theatrical performances, he wrote a play called *The Kentish Barons*, which was played at the Haymarket in 1791, and printed in the same year. He died at Pisa in January, 1817.

Digitized by Google

of poetry—immortal already. You and I must wait for it.

I hear nothing—know nothing. You may easily suppose that the English don't seek me, and I avoid them. To be sure, there are but few or none here, save passengers. Florence and Naples are their Margate and Ramsgate, and much the same sort of company too, by all accounts,—which hurts us among the Italians.

I want to hear of *Lalla Rookh*—are you out? Death and fiends! why don't you tell me where you are, what you are, and how you are? I shall go to Bologna by Ferrara, instead of Mantua: because I would rather see the cell where they caged Tasso,[1] and where he became mad and * *, than his own MSS. at Modena, or the Mantuan birthplace of that harmonious plagiary and

1. Tasso (1544-1595) was imprisoned by Alfonso II. as a lunatic in the Hospital of Sant' Anna at Ferrara, from March, 1579, to July, 1586. All that is known of the place and circumstances of his imprisonment will be found in Solerti's *Vita di Torquato Tasso* (1895). Hobhouse's notes on Tasso (*Hist. Illustrations*, pp. 30, 31) convey, says John Scott (*Sketches of Manners, etc., in Italy*, p. 314), "allusions which play at bo-peep, as it were—now Tasso—now "some one else, as it may be found convenient. We are told that "Tasso was the victim of domestic treason, and the persons are said "to have been unable to appreciate either his virtues or his failings. "If the same is meant to be said of any one else, above all, of the "present day, (and whom, Mr. Hobhouse?) it would be more "candid and clear to say at once what virtues have been under-"estimated, and what vices over-rated."

"We went afterwards," writes Shelley to Peacock, November 9, 1818 (*Prose Works*, ed. H. B. Forman, vol. iv. p. 47), "to see his "prison in the Hospital of Sant' Anna, and I enclose you a piece of "the wood of the very door which, for seven years and three months, "divided this glorious being from the air and the light which had "nourished in him those influences which he has communicated, "through his poetry, to thousands," etc., etc.

"The manuscript of the entire *Gerusalemme Liberata*, written by "Tasso's own hand," was seen by Shelley (*ibid.*, p. 46) at Ferrara. Shelley saw in the "large, free, and flowing" writing "the symbol "of an intense and earnest mind, exceeding at times its own depth, "and admonished to return by the chilliness of the waters of "oblivion striking upon its adventurous feet."

Digitized by Google

miserable flatterer,[1] whose cursed hexameters were drilled into me at Harrow. I saw Verona and Vicenza on my way here—Padua too.

I go *alone*,—but *alone*, because I mean to return here. I only want to see Rome. I have not the least curiosity about Florence, though I must see it for the sake of the Venus, etc., etc.; and I wish also to see the Fall of Terni. I think to return to Venice by Ravenna and Rimini, of both of which I mean to take notes for Leigh Hunt, who will be glad to hear of the scenery of his Poem.[2] There was a devil of a review of him in the *Quarterly*[3] a year ago, which he answered. All answers are imprudent: but, to be sure, poetical flesh and blood must have the last word—that's certain. I thought, and think, very highly of his Poem; but I warned him of the row his favourite antique phraseology would bring him into.

You have taken a house at Hornsey:[4] I had much rather you had taken one in the Apennines. If you think of coming out for a summer, or so, tell me, that I may be upon the hover for you.

Ever, etc.

1. Virgil was born at Andes, identified with the modern Pietola, near Mantua, October 15, B.C. 70.

> "Mantua Virgilio gaudet, Verona Catullo."
> Ovid, *Amor.*, III. xv. 7.

> "Tantum magna suo debet Verona Catullo,
> Quantum parva suo Mantua Virgilio."
> Martial, XIV., cxcv.

> "I abhorr'd
> Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
> The *drill'd* dull lesson, forc'd down word by word
> In my repugnant youth."
> *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza lxxv.

2. *The Story of Rimini.*
3. See *Quarterly Review*, vol. xiv. p. 473.
4. Lalla Rookh Cottage, on Muswell Hill, Hornsey, where Moore wrote the greater part of *Lalla Rookh*, is still standing.

Digitized by Google

## 645.—To John Murray.

Venice, April 14, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—By the favour of Dr. Polidori, who is here on his way to England with the present Lord Guilford, (the late Earl having gone to England by another road, accompanied by his bowels in a separate coffer,) I remit to you, to deliver to Mrs. Leigh, *two miniatures;* but previously you will have the goodness to desire Mr. Love[1] (as a peace-offering between him and me) to set them in plain gold, with my arms complete, and "Painted by Prepiani—Venice, 1817," on the back. I wish also that you would desire Holmes to make a copy of *each*—that is, both—for myself, and that you will retain the said copies till my return. One was done while I was very unwell; the other in my health, which may account for their dissimilitude. I trust that they will reach their destination in safety.

I recommend the Doctor to your good offices with your Government friends; and if you can be of any use to him in a literary point of view, pray be so.

To-day, or rather yesterday, for it is past midnight, I have been up to the battlements of the highest tower in Venice,[2] and seen it and its view, in all the glory of a clear Italian sky. I also went over the Manfrini Palace,[3]

1. "Love," writes Murray to Byron (March 18, 1817), "has "called since, and told me that there was *one* box silver-plated, and "which he thinks you will recollect that he induced you to include "in the bargain," etc. The explanation (see p. 91) seems to have satisfied Byron.

2. "Where Galileo used to hold commerce with the skies. It "commands a fine panoramic view of Venice, and shows you all the "details of this wonderful town, which rises out of the waters, like "the ark of the deluge" (*Diary of an Invalid*, p. 262).

3. "Le palais Manfrin," writes Valery (*Voyages en Italie* (1835), Livre VI. chap. ix.), "est célèbre par sa riche galerie des diverses "écoles et ses curiosités." He mentions particularly "*le portrait* "*de l'Arioste*, vivant, poétique . . . le célèbre tableau dit les *trois*

Digitized by Google

famous for its pictures. Amongst them, there is a portrait of *Ariosto* by *Titian*, surpassing all my anticipation of the power of painting or human expression: it is the poetry of portrait, and the portrait of poetry. There was also one of some learned lady, centuries old, whose name I forget, but whose features must always be remembered. I never saw greater beauty, or sweetness, or wisdom:—it is the kind of face to go mad for, because it cannot walk out of its frame. There is also a famous dead Christ and live apostles, for which Buonaparte offered in vain five thousand Louis; and of which, though it is a *capo d'opera* of Titian, as I am no connoisseur, I say little, and thought less, except of one figure in it. There are ten thousand others, and some very fine Giorgiones amongst them, etc., etc. There is an original Laura and Petrarch, very hideous both. Petrarch has not only the dress, but the features and air of an old woman, and Laura looks by no means like a young one, or a pretty one. What struck me most in the general collection was the extreme resemblance of the style of the female faces in the mass of pictures, so many centuries or generations old, to those you see and meet every day

"*Portraits* de Giorgione, qui semble là dans son triomphe. Ce "dernier chef-d'œuvre avait inspiré à Byron plusieurs stances ad- "miratives de son Histoire vénitienne de Beppo, dont deux vers "toutefois ne sont pas fort exacts, puisque, selon Vasari, Giorgione "ne fut point marié . . . le Portrait de Pétrarque, peu gracieux, "est de Jacques Bellini, le père de Jean." The portrait of Ariosto is now the property of the Earl of Rosebery. The Manfrini collection was partly dispersed in 1856; but some of the pictures are in the Accademia delle Belle Arti.

Moore (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. iii. p. 29) writes, in his Diary for October 11, 1819, "Went to the Manfrini Palace; a noble collec- "tion of pictures; the Three Heads by Giorgione, and his Woman "playing a Guitar, very beautiful, particularly the female head in "the former picture. The Sibilla of Gennaro still more beautiful. "Two heads by Carlo Dolce very fine, and Guido's contest between "Apollo and Pan exquisite; the enthusiasm of Apollo's head, as he "plays, quite divine. The Lucretia of Guido beautiful."

Digitized by Google

amongst the existing Italians. The queen of Cyprus[1] and Giorgione's wife, particularly the latter,[2] are Venetians as it were of yesterday; the same eyes and expression, and, to my mind, there is none finer.

You must recollect, however, that I know nothing of painting; and that I detest it, unless it reminds me of something I have seen, or think it possible to see, for which [reason] I spit upon and abhor all the Saints and subjects of one half the impostures I see in the churches and palaces; and when in Flanders, I never was so disgusted in my life as with Rubens and his eternal wives and infernal glare of colours, as they appeared to me; and in Spain I did not think much of Murillo and Velasquez. Depend upon it, of all the arts, it is the most artificial and unnatural, and that by which the nonsense of mankind is the most imposed upon.[3] I never yet saw the picture—or the statue—which came within a league of my conception or expectation; but I have seen many mountains, and Seas, and Rivers, and views, and two or three women, who went as far beyond it,—besides some horses; and a lion (at Veli Pasha's) in the Morea; and a tiger at supper in Exeter 'Change.[4]

1. Catharine Cornaro, on whose abdication, in 1489, the island of Cyprus was acquired by Venice.

2. "And when you to Manfrini's palace go,
That picture (howsoever fine the rest)
Is loveliest to my mind of all the show;
It may, perhaps, be also to *your* zest,
And that's the cause I rhyme upon it so:
'Tis but a portrait of his son, and wife,
And self; but *such* a woman! love in life!"
*Beppo*, stanza xii.

3. "I leave to learned fingers, and wise hands,
The artist and his ape, to teach and tell
How well his connoisseurship understands
The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell:
Let these describe the undescribable."
*Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza liii.

4. See *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 319.

Digitized by Google

When you write, continue to address to me at *Venice*. Where do you suppose the books you sent to me are? At *Turin!* This comes of "*the foreign office*," which is foreign enough, God knows, for any good it can be of to me, or any one else, and be damned to it, to its last Clerk and first Charlatan, Castlereagh.[1]

This makes my hundredth letter at least.

Yours ever and truly,

B.

1. Robert Stewart (1769–1822), Viscount Castlereagh (1796), succeeded his father as second Marquis of Londonderry in 1821. Leader successively of the Irish and of the British House of Commons, commanding an influence in the latter which Earl Russell, from his sixty years' experience, could only compare to that of Lord Althorp, for twenty years a minister of the first rank, the chosen representative of Great Britain at Congresses which settled the map of Europe,—Castlereagh's services and reputation have been comparatively forgotten. Yet he was the chief agent in crushing the Irish Rebellion and carrying the Union. As Minister for War (1805–6, and 1807–9), he consistently supported Wellington, and inspired the coalition of the Northern Powers; as Foreign Minister (1812–22), he settled the terms by which the Treaty of Vienna secured to Europe a durable peace.

Some of the reasons which have obscured his reputation are obvious. He had read little, and had had neither a public school nor a University education. A great executive minister, he was not a man of ideas. Without the personal magnetism which inspires a following, he despised public favour, and preferred unpopularity as being, in his own phrase, "more convenient and gentlemanlike." Though he always left his opponents much to answer, he was without oratorical power, and Moore does not exaggerate his extraordinary phraseology when he makes Phil Fudge (*Fudge Family in Paris*, Letter ii.) address Castlereagh thus—

> "Where (still to use your Lordship's tropes)
> The level of obedience slopes
> Upward and downward, as the stream
> Of hydra faction kicks the beam."

His handsome person, inherited from his mother, Lady Sarah Frances Seymour-Conway, and conciliatory manners might have won him friends, had they not been marred by the haughty reserve which always made him, as Bulwer Lytton says in *St. Stephen's*—

> "Stately in quiet high-bred self-esteem."

Byron's abhorrence of Castlereagh was purely political, and probably, in its origin, due to Moore. When Castlereagh entered

Digitized by Google

## 646.—To John Murray.

Venice, April 14, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—The present proofs (of the whole) begin only at the 17th page; but as I had corrected and sent back the 1st act, it does not signify.

political life in 1790, he won County Down from Lord Downshire as a friend of reform; and Irishmen, looking to his conduct before and at the time of the Union, execrated him as a political apostate. O'Connell called him the Assassin of his country, and Moore (*Fudge Family in Paris*, Letter iv.), rejoicing in the detestation expressed abroad for England, exults—

> "That 'twas an Irish head, an Irish heart,
> Made thee the fallen and tarnished thing thou art;
> That, as the Centaur gave the infected vest
> In which he died, to rack his conqueror's breast,
> We sent thee C——gh."

Apart from Moore's influence, Byron attributed to Castlereagh, and the coalition of Northern Powers that he inspired, the downfall of Napoleon, which the poet professed to deplore. By Liberals and reformers like Hobhouse, Castlereagh was identified with the repressive policy of the Government in domestic affairs. Strong of will, and politically as well as personally fearless, he was known to dominate the Cabinet, and, though Foreign Minister, he had identified himself with such measures as the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act (February, 1817) and the Six Acts (November, 1819), which he introduced in the Lower House. It was his domestic measures which Shelley attacked in the *Masque of Anarchy*—

> "I met Murder on his way,
> He had a mask like Castlereagh."

Castlereagh also took a leading part in the divorce proceedings against the Queen, whose cause Byron advocated. Finally, by Byron's Italian friends, who, like the Gambas, were Liberals, Castlereagh was detested for his conduct to Genoa. In 1814 Lord W. Bentinck, contrary to Castlereagh's instructions, proclaimed the re-establishment of the Genoese Constitution. But Castlereagh, to secure Italy against French aggression, repudiated these pledges, and at the Congress of Vienna favoured the annexation of Genoa to Piedmont.

These were the causes which moved Byron to write of Castlereagh as he does in his letters, to compose his epigrams alluding to his suicide, to speak of him in his "Irish Avatar" as "a wretch never "named but with curses and jeers," or to attack him in the Dedication to *Don Juan* as "the intellectual eunuch Castlereagh," the "cold-blooded, smooth-faced, placid miscreant," "the vulgarest "tool that Tyranny could want," "a bungler even in its disgusting "trade," "a tinkering slave-maker," "a second Eutropius."

Digitized by Google

The third act is certainly damned bad, and, like the Archbishop of Grenada's homily [1] (which savoured of the palsy), has the dregs of my fever, during which it was written. It must on *no account* be published in its present state. I will try and reform it, or re-write it altogether; but the impulse is gone, and I have no chance of making any thing out of it. I would not have it published as it is on any account. The speech of Manfred to the Sun is the only part of this act I thought good myself; the rest is certainly as bad as bad can be, and I wonder what the devil possessed me.

I am very glad indeed that you sent me Mr. Gifford's opinion without *deduction*.[2] Do you suppose me such a Sotheby as not to be very much obliged to him? or that in fact I was not, and am not, convinced and convicted in my conscience of this same overt act of nonsense?

I shall try at it again: in the mean time, lay it upon the shelf (the whole drama, I mean): but pray correct your copies of the 1st and 2nd acts by the original MS.

I am not coming to England; but going to Rome in a few days.[3] I return to Venice in *June:* so, pray, address all letters, etc. to me *here*, as usual, that is, to *Venice*. Dr. Polidori this day left this city with Lord Guilford for England. He is charged with some books to your care (from me), and two miniatures also to the same address, *both* for my sister.

Recollect *not* to publish, upon pain of I know not what, until I have tried again at the third act. I am not

1. *Gil Blas de Santillane*, livre vii. cap. 4. The archbishop's homily "savoured" of the apoplexy.

2. Murray (March 28, 1817) sent Byron Gifford's objections to act iii. of *Manfred*, which, as Murray says, "he does not by any "means like."

3. Byron left Venice towards the middle of April, and, passing through Ferrara, Florence, and Foligno, met Hobhouse at Rome. He returned to Venice towards the end of May.

Digitized by Google

sure that I *shall* try, and still less that I shall succeed, if I do; but I am very sure, that (as it is) it is unfit for publication or perusal; and unless I can make it out to my own satisfaction, I won't have any part published.

I write in haste, and after having lately written very often.

Yours ever truly,

B^x.

Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER XVI.

### VENICE, ROME, OR LA MIRA, APRIL, 1817—DECEMBER, 1817.

FERRARA AND *THE LAMENT OF TASSO*—ROME—RETURN TO VENICE—*CHILDE HAROLD*, CANTO IV.—*BEPPO*.

### 647.—To John Murray.[1]

Foligno, April 26, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you the other day from Florence, inclosing a MS. entitled *The Lament of Tasso*.[2] It was written in consequence of my having been lately at Ferrara. In the last section of this MS. *but one* (that is, the penultimate), I think that I have omitted a line in the copy sent to you from Florence, viz. after the line—

And woo compassion to a blighted name,

insert,

Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.

The *context* will show you *the sense*, which is not clear in this quotation. *Remember, I write this in the supposition that you have received my Florentine packet.*

At Florence I remained but a day, having a hurry for Rome, to which I am thus far advanced. However, I

1. The original of this letter cannot be found. It is, therefore, printed as published in Moore's *Life* (p. 353).

2. The manuscript of *The Lament of Tasso* is dated April 20, 1817. The poem was published July 17, 1817.

Digitized by Google

went to the two galleries, from which one returns drunk with beauty. The Venus is more for admiration than love;[1] but there are sculpture and painting, which for the first time at all gave me an idea of what people mean by their *cant*, and what Mr. Braham calls "entusi-"musy" (*i.e.* enthusiasm) about those two most artificial of the arts. What struck me most were, the Mistress of Raphael, a portrait; the mistress of Titian, a portrait; a Venus of Titian in the Medici gallery—*the* Venus; Canova's Venus also in the other gallery: Titian's mistress is also in the other gallery (that is, in the Pitti Palace gallery); the Parcæ of Michael Angelo, a picture; and the Antinous—the Alexander[2]—and one or two not very decent groupes in marble; the Genius of Death, a sleeping figure, etc., etc.

I also went to the Medici chapel—fine frippery in great slabs of various expensive stones,[3] to commemorate

1. The Venus de' Medici in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence. While the statue was at Paris, whither it was carried by Napoleon, its place was occupied by Canova's Venus. By the intervention of the Powers, the Venus was restored to Florence.

"Within the pale
We stand, and in that form and face behold
What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail. . . .
* * * * *
We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
Dazzled and drunk with Beauty, till the heart
Reels with its fulness."

*Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanzas xlix., l.

2. Probably the head of Alexander which inspired Alfieri with his Sonnet (*Son.* xlii.)—

"Quel già sì fero fiammegiante sguardo
Del Macedone invitto emul di Marte," etc., etc.

3. The tombs of the Medici in the Cappella dei Principi and the Cappella dei Depositi of the Church of San Lorenzo at Florence.

"What is her Pyramid of precious stones?
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones
Of merchant-dukes?" etc.

*Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza lx.



Digitized by Google

fifty rotten and forgotten carcases. It is unfinished, and will remain so.

The church of "Santa Croce"[1] contains much illustrious nothing. The tombs of Machiavelli, Michael Angelo, Galileo Galilei, and Alfieri, make it the Westminster Abbey of Italy. I did not admire *any* of these tombs—beyond their contents. That of Alfieri is heavy, and all of them seem to me overloaded. What is necessary but a bust and name? and perhaps a date? the last for the unchronological, of whom I am one. But all your Allegory and eulogy is infernal, and worse than the long wigs of English numskulls upon Roman bodies in the statuary of the reigns of Charles, William, and Anne.

When you write, write to *Venice*, as usual; I mean to return there in a fortnight. I shall not be in England for a long time. This afternoon I met Lord and Lady Jersey, and saw them for some time: all well; children grown and healthy; she very pretty, but sunburnt; he very sick of travelling; bound for Paris. There are not many English on the move, and those who are are mostly homewards. I shall not return till business makes me, being much better where I am in health, etc., etc.

For the sake of my personal comfort, I pray you send me immediately *to Venice—mind, Venice*—viz. *Waites' tooth-powder, red*, a quantity; *Calcined Magnesia*, of the best quality, a quantity; and all this by safe, sure, and speedy means; and, by the Lord! do it.

1. Santa Croce, the Florentine Pantheon, was built by Arnolfo del Colle, in 1295 (Perrens, *Hist. de Florence*, vol. iii. p. 488).

> "Here repose
> Angelo's—Alfieri's bones—and his,
> The starry Galileo, with his woes;
> Here Machiavelli's earth returned to whence it rose."
> *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza liv.

Digitized by Google

I have done nothing at *Manfred's* third act. You must wait; I'll have at it in a week or two, or so.

Yours ever,

B.

## 648.—To John Murray.

Rome, May 5, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—By this post (or next at farthest) I send you, in two *other* covers, the new third act of *Manfred*. I have re-written the greater part, and returned what is not altered in the *proof* you sent me. The Abbot is become a good man, and the Spirits are brought in at the death. You will find, I think, some good poetry in this new act, here and there; and if so, print it, without sending me further proofs, *under Mr. Gifford's correction*, if he will have the goodness to overlook it. Address all answers to *Venice*, as usual; I mean to return there in ten days.

*The Lament of Tasso*, which I sent from Florence, has, I trust, arrived: I look upon it as a "these be good "rhymes," as Pope's papa said to him when he was a boy.[1] For the *two—it* and the Drama—you will disburse to me (*via* Kinnaird) *six* hundred guineas. You will perhaps be surprised that I set the same price upon this as upon the drama; but, besides that I look upon it as *good*, I won't take less than three hundred guineas for any thing. The two together will make *you* a larger publication than the *Siege* and *Parisina;* so you may think yourself let off

1. "His primary and principal purpose," says Johnson, in his Life of Pope (*Lives of the Poets*), "was to be a poet, with which his "father accidentally concurred, by proposing subjects, and obliging "him to correct his performances by many revisals; after which, the "old gentleman, when he was satisfied, would say, 'These be good "rhymes.'"

Digitized by Google

very easy; that is to say, if these poems are good for any thing, which I hope and believe.

I have been some days in Rome the Wonderful. I am seeing sights, and have done nothing else, except the new third act for you. I have this morning seen a live pope and a dead cardinal: Pius VII. has been burying Cardinal Bracchi, whose body I saw in state at the Chiesa Nuova. Rome has delighted me beyond every thing, since Athens and Constantinople. But I shall not remain long this visit. Address to Venice.

Ever yours,

B^N^.

P.S.—I have got my saddle-horses here, and have ridden, and am riding, all about the country.

## 649.—To John Murray.

Rome, May 9, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,—Address all answers to Venice; for there I shall return in fifteen days, God willing.

I sent you from Florence *The Lament of Tasso*, and from Rome the reformed third act of *Manfred*, both of which, I trust, will duly arrive. The terms of these two I mentioned in my last, and will repeat in this: it is three hundred for each, or *six* hundred guineas for the two—that is, if you like, and they are good for any thing.

At last one of the parcels is arrived. In the notes to *Childe Harold* there is a blunder of yours or mine: you talk of arrival at *St. Gingo*, and, immediately after, add —"on the height is the Chateau of Clarens."[1] This is sad work: Clarens is on the *other* side of the lake, and

1. Clarens is on the northern shore of Lake Geneva; St. Gingolph on the south bank, nearly opposite Clarens or Montreux.

Digitized by Google

it is quite impossible that I should have so bungled. Look at the MS.; and at any rate rectify this.

The *Tales of my Landlord* I have read with great pleasure, and perfectly understand now why my Sister and aunt are so very positive in the very erroneous persuasion that they must have been written by me. If you knew me as well as they do, you would have fallen, perhaps, into the same mistake. Some day or other, I will explain to you *why*—when I have time; at present, it does not matter; but you must have thought this blunder of theirs very odd, and so did I, till I had read the book. Croker's letter to you is a very great compliment; I shall return it to you in my next.

Southey's *Wat Tyler*[1] is rather awkward; but the Goddess Nemesis has done well. He is—I will not say what, but I wish he was something else. I hate all intolerance, but most the intolerance of Apostacy, and the wretched vehemence with which a miserable creature, who has contradicted himself, lies to his own heart, and endeavours to establish his sincerity by proving himself a rascal—*not* for changing his opinions, but for persecuting those who are of less malleable matter. It is no disgrace to Mr. Southey to have written *Wat Tyler*, and afterwards to have written his birthday or Victory odes

1. In 1794 Southey had written *Wat Tyler*, glowing with sympathy for the French Revolution. The drama was surreptitiously published in 1817, when the writer had become (1813) poet-laureate. The Lord Chancellor refused to stop the publication on the ground that, as the poem was seditious, it could not be the subject of copyright. In the debate on the Seditious Meetings Bill, March 14, 1817, Mr. W. Smith, M.P., said, "But what he most detested, what "most filled him with disgust, was the settled determined malignity "of a renegado" (*Hansard*, vol. xxxv. p. 109). He then proceeded to quote from *Wat Tyler*, which "appeared to him to be the most "seditious book that was ever written." Coleridge defended Southey in the *Courier* for March 17, 1817. Southey's own reply, "*A "Letter* to William Smith, Esq., M.P., from Robert Southey, Esq.,' was published by Murray in May, 1817.

Digitized by Google

(I speak only of their *politics*), but it is something, for which I have no words, for this man to have endeavoured to bring to the stake (for such would he do) men who think as he thought, and for no reason but because they think so still, when he has found it convenient to think otherwise. Opinions are made to be changed, or how is truth to be got at? We don't arrive at it by standing on one leg, or on the first day of our setting out, but, though we may jostle one another on the way, that is no reason why we should strike or trample. *Elbowing's* enough. I am all for moderation, which profession of faith I beg leave to conclude by wishing Mr. Southey damned—not as a poet but as a politician. There is a place in Michael Angelo's last judgment in the Sistine Chapel which would just suit him, and may the like await him in that of our Lord and (*not his*) Saviour Jesus Christ—Amen!

I perceive you are publishing a *Life* of Raffael d'Urbino:[1] it may perhaps interest you to hear that a set of German artists here allow their *hair* to grow, and trim it into *his fashion*, thereby drinking the cummin[2] of the disciples of the old philosopher; if they would cut their hair, convert it into brushes, and paint like him, it would be more "*German* to the matter."

1. Richard Duppa (1770–1831), after studying at Rome, matriculated, in 1807, at Trinity College, Oxford. He published numerous works on art, botany, and travelling. His *Life, etc., of Michael Angelo Buonarotti* appeared in 1806; his *Life of Raffaele* in 1816.

2. Pliny (*Nat. Hist.*, lib. xx. cap. xiv.) is the authority for the story that cummin was used by the followers of M. Porcius Latro, the rhetorician, to produce a "studious" complexion. Compare Horace, *Epist.* I. xix. 18—

"Quod si
Pallerem casu, biberent exsangue cuminum."

and Persius, *Sat.*, v. 55—

"Pallentis grana cumini."

Digitized by Google

I'll tell you a story. The other day, a man here—an English — mistaking the statues of Charlemagne and Constantine, which are *Equestrian*, for those of Peter and Paul, asked another *which* was Paul of these same horsemen?—to which the reply was, "I thought, Sir, that "St. Paul had never got on horseback since his *accident*!"

I'll tell you another: Henry Fox,[1] writing to some one from Naples, the other day, after an illness, adds—"and I am so changed, that my *oldest creditors* would "hardly know me."

I am delighted with Rome—as I would be with a bandbox, that is, it is a fine thing to see, finer than Greece; but I have not been here long enough to affect it as a residence, and I must go back to Lombardy, because I am wretched at being away from M[ariann]a. I have been riding my saddle-horses every day, and been to Albano, its lakes, and to the top of the Alban Mount, and to Frascati, Aricia, etc., etc., with an etc., etc., etc., about the city, and in the city: for all which—*vide* Guide-book. As a *whole*, *ancient* and *modern*, it beats Greece, Constantinople, every thing—at least that I have ever seen. But I can't describe, because my first impressions are always strong and confused, and my Memory *selects* and reduces them to order, like distance in the landscape, and blends them better, although they may be less distinct. There must be a sense or two more than we have, as mortals, which I suppose the Devil has (or t'other); for where there is much to be grasped

1. Henry Stephen Fox (1791–1846), nephew of Charles James Fox, travelled in Italy after the Peace of 1815, with Lord Alvanley and Thomas Raikes. His illness (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1847, vol. i. p. 82) was a Roman fever. From 1835 to 1843 he was British Minister at Washington, and helped to arrange the Ashburton Treaty (1841). (See *Journal of Thomas Raikes*, vol. iv. pp. 124, 134, 334.)

Digitized by Google

we are always at a loss, and yet feel that we ought to have a higher and more extended comprehension.

I have had a letter from Moore, who is in some alarm about his poem. I don't see why.

I have had another from my poor dear Augusta, who is in a sad fuss about my late illness; do, pray, tell her (the truth) that I am better than ever, and in importunate health, growing (if not grown) large and ruddy, and congratulated by impertinent persons on my robustious appearance, when I ought to be pale and interesting.

You tell me that George B[yron] has got a son, and Augusta says a daughter; which is it?—it is no great matter: the father is a good man, an excellent officer, and has married a very nice little woman,[1] who will bring him more babes than income; howbeit she had a handsome dowry, and is a very charming girl;—but he may as well get a ship.

I have no thoughts of coming amongst you yet awhile, so that I can fight off business. If I could but make a tolerable sale of Newstead, there would be no occasion for my return; and I can assure you very sincerely, that I am much happier (or, at least, have been so) out of your island than in it.

Yours ever truly,

B.

P.S.—There are few English here, but several of my acquaintance; amongst others, the Marquis of Lansdowne, with whom I dine to-morrow. I met the Jerseys on the road at Foligno—all well.

1. George Anson Byron, afterwards Lord Byron, married, in 1816, Elizabeth Mary, daughter of Sacheverell Chandos Pole, of Radborne, Derbyshire. The child here spoken of was Mary Anne, who married, in 1834, John Blenkinsopp Coulson, of Blenkinsopp Castle.

Digitized by Google

Oh—I forgot—the Italians have printed *Chillon*, etc., a *piracy*,—a pretty little edition, prettier than yours—and published, as I found to my great astonishment on arriving, here; and what is odd, is, that the English is quite correctly printed. Why they did it, or who did it, I know not; but so it is;—I suppose, for the English people. I will send you a copy.

## 650.—To John Murray.

[Rome], May 10th, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Will you forward the enclosed letter to its address? The person to whom it is addressed will probably have a parcel for me in a fortnight after the receipt of this letter, which I have desired him to consign to *you;* and I request you will have the goodness, if possible, to get it forwarded to me *at Venice* by some safe and sure conveyance, which may surely be done, though I have not been lucky with my parcels hitherto.

If Mr. Kinnaird or Mr. Davies come out, they would convey it; but I want it to be sent sooner, so perhaps some other way would be better.

I also would thank you to send me some *calcined Magnesia* and toothpowder.

Yours very truly,

B.

I have written to you often lately.

## 651.—To Thomas Moore.

Rome, May 12, 1817.

I have received your letter here, where I have taken a cruise lately; but I shall return back to Venice in a

Digitized by Google

few days,[1] so that if you write again, address there, as usual. I am not for returning to England so soon as you imagine; and by no means at all as a residence. If you cross the Alps in your projected expedition, you will find me somewhere in Lombardy, and very glad to see you. Only give me a word or two beforehand, for I would readily diverge some leagues to meet you.

Of Rome I say nothing; it is quite indescribable, and the Guide-book is as good as any other. I dined yesterday with Lord Lansdowne, who is on his return. But there are few English here at present; the winter is *their* time. I have been on horseback most of the day, all days since my arrival, and have taken it as I did Constantinople. But Rome is the elder sister, and the finer. I went some days ago to the top of the Alban Mount, which is superb. As for the Coliseum, Pantheon, St. Peter's, the Vatican, Palatine, etc., etc.—as I said, *vide* Guide-book. They are quite inconceivable, and must *be seen*. The Apollo Belvidere is the image of Lady Adelaide Forbes[2] —I think I never saw such a likeness.

I have seen the Pope alive, and a cardinal dead,—both of whom looked very well indeed.[3] The latter was in state in the Chiesa Nuova, previous to his interment.

1. Hobhouse, then Lord Broughton, writing, May 3, 1856, to Earl Stanhope, says—

"Lord Byron came to Rome on the 29th of April, 1817, and left "it on the 20th of May, 1817. Two or three days of this short "three weeks' visit were, as you probably are aware, passed in "excursions to Albano and Tivoli; but lest you should be surprised "at his taking so minute a survey of so many objects in so short a "time, you may as well be told that his original sketch of the Fourth "Canto of *Childe Harold* was much less in detril than the poem as "published. He put that sketch into my hands at La Mira, near "Venice; and I, at his desire, made a list of certain objects which "he had not noticed, and which he afterwards described in several "magnificent stanzas."

2. See *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 230, *note* 3.

3. Pius VII. and Cardinal Bracchi.

Digitized by Google

Your poetical alarms are groundless; go on and prosper. Here is Hobhouse just come in, and my horses at the door; so that I must mount and take the field in the Campus Martius, which, by the way, is all built over by modern Rome.

Yours very and ever, etc.

P.S.—Hobhouse presents his remembrances, and is eager, with all the world, for your new poem.

## 652.—To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

Florence, May 27th 1817.

My dearest Augusta,—I am thus far on my return from Rome to Venice. From Rome I wrote to you at some length. Hobhouse is gone to Naples for a short time.

I received a letter or two from you during my stay—one old, and one new. My health is reestablished, and has continued so through some very warm weather, and a good deal of horse and mountain exercise and scrambling; for I lived out of doors ever since my arrival.

I shall be glad to hear from or of you, and of your children and mine. By the way, it seems that I have got another—a *daughter*[1] by that same lady, whom you

1. The following is a copy of Allegra's baptismal certificate, taken from the Register Book of Baptisms of St. Giles-in-the-Fields:—

| Date of baptism. | Christian name. | Parents' Christian names. | Surname. | Date of birth. | Father's residence. | Father's rank. | By whom. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1818. March 9th. | Clara Allegra Byron, born of | Rt. Hon. George Gordon Lord Byron y^e^ reputed Father by Clara Mary Jane | Clairmont | 12 Jan^r^, 1817 | No fixed residence. Travelling on the Continent | Peer | Charles Macarthy. |

"Bap^d^ the same day by the same Clergyman, William & Clara

will recognize by what I said of her in former letters—I mean *her* who returned to England to become a Mamma incog., and whom I pray the Gods to keep there. I am a little puzzled how to dispose of this new production (which is two or three months old, though I did not receive the accounts till at Rome), but shall probably send for and place it in a Venetian convent, to become a good Catholic, and (it may be) a *Nun*, being a character somewhat wanted in our family.

They tell me it is very pretty, with blue eyes and *dark* hair; and, although I never was attached nor pretended attachment to the mother, still in case of the eternal war and alienation which I foresee about my legitimate daughter, Ada, it may be as well to have something to repose a hope upon. I must love something in my old age, and probably circumstances will render this poor little creature a great and, perhaps, my only comfort. . . .[1]

## 653.—To John Murray.

Venice, May 30, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I returned from Rome two days ago, and have received your letter; but no sign nor tidings of the parcel sent through Sir —— Stuart,[2] which you mention. After an interval of months, a packet of

"Everina, Children of Percy Bysshe Shelley, Esq., & Mary Woll-"stonecraft, his Wife, of Great Marlow, Co. Bucks (late of Great "Russell Street), the first born 24 January, 1816, the second 2d "Sept., 1817."

1. The conclusion of the letter is missing.

2. "I sent," writes Murray, April 12, 1817, "sundry Packets, "(1) Tooth Powder; (2) your *Works*, 5 vols.; (3) Two copies each "of *Harold* and *Chillon*; (4) sundry letters for you accumulated "during your absence—all of which Mr. Croker very obligingly "took charge of, and has sent to you *vid* Paris, with orders to Sir "Chas. Stewart to forward them instantly." Sir C. Stuart afterwards became Lord Stuart de Rothesay.

Digitized by Google

*Tales*, etc., found me at Rome; but this is all, and may be all that ever will find me. The post seems to be the only sane conveyance; and *that only for letters*. From Florence I sent you a poem on Tasso, and from Rome the new third act of *Manfred*, and by Dr. Polidori two pictures for my sister. I left Rome, and made a rapid journey home. You will continue to direct here as usual. Mr. Hobhouse is gone to Naples: I should have run down there too for a week, but for the quantity of English whom I heard of there. I prefer hating them at a distance; unless an earthquake, or a good real eruption of Vesuvius, were insured to reconcile me to their vicinity.

I know no other situation except Hell which I should feel inclined to participate with them—as a race, always excepting several individuals. There were few of them in Rome, and I believe none whom you know, except that old Blue-*bore* Sotheby, who will give a fine account of Italy, in which he will be greatly assisted by his total ignorance of Italian, and yet this is the translator of Tasso.

The day before I left Rome I saw three robbers guillotined. The ceremony—including the *masqued* priests; the half-naked executioners; the bandaged criminals; the black Christ and his banner; the scaffold; the soldiery; the slow procession, and the quick rattle and heavy fall of the axe; the splash of the blood, and the ghastliness of the exposed heads—is altogether more impressive than the vulgar and ungentlemanly dirty "new drop," and dog-like agony of infliction upon the sufferers of the English sentence. Two of these men behaved calmly enough, but the first of the three died with great terror and reluctance, which was very horrible. He would not lie down; then his neck was too large for

Digitized by Google

the aperture, and the priest was obliged to drown his exclamations by still louder exhortations. The head was off before the eye could trace the blow; but from an attempt to draw back the head, notwithstanding it was held forward by the hair, the first head was cut off close to the ears: the other two were taken off more cleanly. It is better than the oriental way, and (I should think) than the axe of our ancestors. The pain seems little; and yet the effect to the spectator, and the preparation to the criminal, are very striking and chilling. The first turned me quite hot and thirsty, and made me shake so that I could hardly hold the opera-glass (I was close, but determined to see, as one should see every thing, once, with attention); the second and third (which shows how dreadfully soon things grow indifferent), I am ashamed to say, had no effect on me as a horror, though I would have saved them if I could.

It is some time since I heard from you—the *12th April* I believe.

Yours ever truly,

B.

## 654.—To John Murray.

Venice, June 4, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I have received the proofs of the *Lament of Tasso*, which makes me hope that you have also received the reformed third act of *Manfred*, from Rome, which I sent soon after my arrival there. My date will apprize you of my return home within these few days. For me, I have received *none* of your packets, except, after long delay, the *Tales of my Landlord*, which I before acknowledged. I do not at all understand the *why nots*, but so it is; no *Manuel*,[1] no letters, no tooth-powder, no

1. Maturin's play.

Digitized by Google

*extract* from Moore's *Italy* concerning Marino Falieri, no *nothing*—as a man hallooed out at one of Burdett's elections, after a long ululatus of "No Bastille! No 'Governor Aris![1] No"—God knows who or what;—but his *ne plus ultra* was, "no nothing!"—and my receipts of your packages amount to about his meaning. I want the extract from *Moore's* Italy very much, and the tooth-powder, and the magnesia; I don't care so much about the poetry, or the letters, or Mr. Maturin's by-Jasus tragedy. Most of the things sent by the post have come—I mean proofs and letters; therefore send me Marino Falieri by the post, in a letter.

I was delighted with Rome, and was on horseback all round it many hours daily, besides in it the rest of my time, bothering over its marvels. I excursed and skirred the country round to Alba, Tivoli, Frascati, Licenza, etc., etc.; besides, I visited twice the Fall of Terni, which beats every thing.[2] On my way back, close to the temple by its banks, I got some famous trout out of the river Clitumnus—the prettiest little stream in all poesy,[3] near the first post from Foligno and Spoletto.—I did not stay at Florence, being anxious to get home to Venice, and having already seen the galleries and other sights. I left my commendatory letters the evening before I went, so I saw nobody.

To-day, Pindemonte,[4] the celebrated poet of Verona,

1. Aris, according to the *Annual Register* (1800, p. 211), "a "rigorous and hard-hearted man," was keeper of Coldbath Fields Prison.

2. *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza lxxi.

3. Compare Virgil, *Georg.*, ii. 146, and *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza lxvi.

4. Ippolito Pindemonte (1753-1828), born at Verona, translated into blank verse the *Odyssey*, the *Georgics*, and passages from Ovid and Catullus. He also wrote a classic tragedy, *Arminio*, and published several volumes of poetry. Moore, who met him in October, 1819, and "had some conversation with him" (*Memoirs*,

Digitized by Google

called on me; he is a little thin man, with acute and pleasing features; his address good and gentle; his appearance altogether very philosophical; his age about sixty, or more. He is one of their best going. I gave him *Forsyth*, as he speaks, or reads rather, a little English, and will find there a favourable account of himself. He enquired after his old Cruscan friends,[1] Parsons, Greathead, Mrs. Piozzi, and Merry, all of whom he had known in his youth. I gave him as bad an account of them as I could, answering, as the false "Solomon Lob" does to "Totterton" in the farce, that they were "all gone dead,"[2] and damned by

*etc.*, vol. iii. p. 26), speaks of him as "a thin, sickly old gentleman." Joseph Forsyth, in his *Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, etc.* (2nd ed. p. 22), says, "Pindemonte was connected with some of our English "Cruscans, but he cannot be charged with their flimzy, gauzy, "glittering nonsense. He thinks, and makes his readers think. "Happy in description, sedate even in his light themes, generally "melancholy, and sometimes sublime, he bears a fine resemblance "to our Gray, and, like Gray, has written but little in a country "where most poets are voluminous." William Stewart Rose, in his *Letters from the North of Italy* (1819, vol. i. p. 45), quotes Forsyth in the following passage, speaking of Verona: "Still there is one "yet living, who must not be passed over in utter silence; one—

"'Per cui la fama in te chiara risuona
Egregia, eccelsa, alma Verona.'

"You will easily guess that I mean Ippolito Pindemonte, a poet "who has caught a portion of that sun, whose setting beams yet "gild the horizon of Italy. Mr. Forsyth, our best Italian traveller, "sums up the merits of this gentleman, by saying that he *thinks*, and "makes his readers *think*. Were I confined to the same number "of words, I should say that he *feels*, and makes his readers *feel*."

1. For "his Cruscan friends," see *Poems*, 1898, vol. i. p. 358, *note* 1.

2. *Love laughs at Locksmiths*, by George Colman the Younger. In act ii. sc. 1, "Totterton" says to "Risk," disguised as "Solomon "Lob," "Well, and what's become of old Gruntlepool, the under-"taker?" *Risk.* "He's gone dead, too, and were buried last "Christmas." *Totterton.* "What! the death-hunter dead, too? "Why, bless us! they do nothing but die at Tadcaster? What's "the reason of it, Solomon?" *Risk.* "We ha' gotten three more "'pottycaries."

Digitized by Google

a satire more than twenty years ago; that the name of their extinguisher was Gifford; that they were but a sad set of scribes after all, and no great things in any other way. He seemed, as was natural, very much pleased with this account of his old acquaintances, and went away greatly gratified with that and Mr. Forsyth's sententious paragraph of applause in his own (Pindemonte's) favour. After having been a little libertine in his youth, he is grown devout, and takes prayers, and talks to himself, to keep off the Devil; but for all that, he is a very nice little old gentleman.

I forgot to tell you that at Bologna (which is celebrated for producing popes, painters, and sausages) I saw an anatomical gallery, where there is a deal of waxwork, in which * * * * * *

I am sorry to hear of your row with Hunt:[1] but suppose him to be exasperated by the *Quarterly* and your refusal to *deal;* and when one is angry and edites a paper I should think the temptation too strong for literary nature, which is not always human. I can't conceive in what, and for what, he abuses you: what have you done? you are not an author—nor a politician—nor a public character; I know no scrape you have tumbled into. I am the more sorry for this, because I introduced you to Hunt, and because I believe him to be a very good man; but till I know the particulars, I can give no opinion.

Let me know about *Lallah Rookh*, which must be out by this time.

I restore the proofs, but the *punctuation* should be corrected. I feel too lazy to have at it myself; so beg

1. *Wat Tyler* was reviewed in the *Examiner* for May 4, 1817, and, in the numbers for May 11 and May 18, Southey's letter was violently attacked, and Murray himself not spared.



Digitized by Google

and pray Mr. Gifford for me.—Address for Venice. In a few days I go to my *Villeggiatura*, in a casino near the Brenta,[1] a few miles only on the main land. I have determined on another year, and *many years* of residence if I can compass them. Marianna is with me, hardly recovered of the fever, which has been attacking all Italy last winter. I am afraid she is a little hectic; but I hope the best.

Ever yours truly,

B.

P.S.—Torwaltzen has done a bust of me at Rome for Mr. Hobhouse, which is reckoned very good.[2] He is their best after Canova, and by some preferred to him.

1. The "deep-dyed" Brenta flows, from its source in Tyrol, past Padua into the Lagoon at Fusina. Byron's villa La Mira was on the river near Mira, about seven miles inland.

2. Hobhouse, writing to Murray, December 7, 1817 (*Memoir, etc., of John Murray*, vol. i. p. 391), says, "I shall conclude "with telling you about Lord B.'s bust. It is a masterpiece by "Thorwaldsen, who is thought by most judges to surpass Canova in "this branch of sculpture. The likeness is perfect; the artist worked "*con amore*, and told me it was the finest head he had ever under "his hand." In Karl Elze's *Life of Lord Byron* (Eng. translation, 1872, p. 221) the following account is given of Byron's visit to Thorwaldsen: "Hobhouse, commissioned by Byron, had written "to Thorwaldsen, asking him whether and when Byron could sit to "him. Thorwaldsen, who was a very bad and very indolent letter-"writer, probably delayed his answer, and Byron, without waiting "for it, went to him. 'Byron placed himself opposite me,'—so "Thorwaldsen told the story to Andersen—'but at once began to "put on a quite different expression from that usual to him. "Will "you not sit still?" said I. "You need not assume that look." "'That is my expression," said Byron. "Indeed?" said I, and I "then represented him as I wished. When the bust was finished, "it was universally admitted to be an excellent likeness. Byron, "when he saw the bust, said, "It is not at all like me; my expres-"sion is more unhappy."'"

The original of the bust is now in the possession of Lady Dorchester. The head of the statue at Trinity College, Cambridge, begun by Thorwaldsen in 1829, and finished in 1834, is a repetition of the original bust.

Digitized by Google

I have had a letter from Mr. Hodgson—maudlin and fine-feeling. He is very happy—has got a living, but not a child: if he had stuck to a curacy, babes would have come of course, because he could not have maintained them.

Remember me to all friends, etc., etc.

An Austrian officer, the other day, being in love with a Venetian, was ordered, with his regiment, into Hungary. Distracted between love and duty, he purchased a deadly drug, which, dividing with his mistress, both swallowed. The ensuing pains were terrific, but the pills were purgative, and not poisonous, by the contrivance of the unsentimental apothecary; so that so much suicide was all thrown away. You may conceive the previous confusion and the final laughter; but the intention was good on all sides.

## 655.—To John Murray.

Venice, June 8, 1817.

Dear Sir,—The present letter will be delivered to you by two Armenian friars, on their way, by England, to Madras. They will also convey some copies of the grammar, which I think you agreed to take. If you can be of any use to them, either amongst your naval or East Indian acquaintances, I hope you will so far oblige me, as they and their order have been remarkably attentive and friendly towards me since my arrival at Venice. Their names are Father Sukias Somalian and Father Sarkis Theodorosian. They speak Italian, and probably French, or a little English. Repeating earnestly my recommendatory request, believe me,

Very truly yours,

Byron.

Digitized by Google

Perhaps you can help them to their passage, or give or get them letters for India.

## 656.—To John Hanson.

Venice, June 14th 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Since my return from Rome, I have twice written to Mr. Kinnaird and to Mr. Scrope Davies, to request them to transmit to you my particular and earnest desire that Newstead (and, if possible, Rochdale also) may be brought once more to the hammer without delay this present summer. I regret now very much not having accepted Mr. Wilson's proposition (of eighty thousand guineas), and it seems to be in vain to expect more or to wait longer. Every year is an additional loss and a greater embarrassment, and beyond the present summer it were idle to wait.

Mr. Kinnaird and yourself have full powers to act for me during my absence; my instructions are very simple —let the estate be put up and sold to the highest responsible bidder. It is useless to speak to me of the "times, "etc.;" "the times" will not improve, and I must take the market price, both in justice to my creditors and to myself. I wish the same to be done by Rochdale.

These requests are *definitive*, and I beg that you will have the goodness to attend to them without fail. Pray send me an early answer.

If Sir R. N. has paid the last year's account, or if there is any balance from Newstead rents, have the goodness to transmit the same to Mr. Kinnaird, and through his partner Mr. Morland's bank to my credit by their means.

I received your Son Charles's (to whom and to all yours I beg my remembrances may be made acceptable)

Digitized by Google

paper, which I shall transmit to England by a private hand on the first safe opportunity, as from the delay and omission of many things addressed to me from England, I should rather not send it by post.

Above all I recommend you my above requests, as I have no immediate intentions whatever of returning to England, and still less of settling there as a resident.

Ever yours very truly,

BYRON.

P.S.—I presume that Sir R. N. has of course paid the £200; if not, he will please to pay it in.

From Newstead there should surely be some balance; it is now more than a year since I quitted England (a year and two months), and the tenants were in great arrear before; at all events let me hear.

Address to Venice as usual.

## 657.—To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

Venice, June 14th 1817.

DEAREST AUGUSTA,—I write to you a few lines merely to request you to urge to Mr. Kinnaird and Mr. Hanson from me my request that Newstead be put up for sale *and definitively sold* to the highest bidder *this summer*, as every year would become an additional loss and embarrassment by the delay. I am sick of objections and will hear none, as there is but this alternative for my creditors or myself; *any price* were better than the ruin occasioned by protracted delay, because no price in that case could liquidate the accumulation.

It is amongst my regrets that I did not accept Mr. Wilson's proposition in 1815, as it seems useless to wait

Digitized by Google

longer or expect more. Pray do not forget to press my desire and order strongly on Hanson.

Yours very truly,

B.

P.S.—I wrote to you lately. You will not see me in England, unless in case of absolute business.

## 658.—To John Murray.

La Mira, near Venice, June 14, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I write to you from the banks of the Brenta, a few miles from Venice, where I have colonised for six months to come. Address, as usual, to Venice.

Three months after date (*17th* March),—like the unnegociable bill despondingly received by the reluctant tailor,—your dispatch has arrived, containing the extract from Moore's *Italy* and Mr. Maturin's bankrupt tragedy.[1] It is the absurd work of a clever man. I think it might have done upon the stage, if he had made Manuel (by

1. *Manuel* was produced at Drury Lane, March 8, 1817. In the Preface to the published play (1817, p. viii.), Maturin says, "I now "... turn to a more grateful subject—to Lord Byron, and the "Committee of Drury-lane Theatre. I rejoice in taking the first "opportunity allowed me to offer my acknowledgments for the "liberality which condescended to recognize the claims of an obscure "stranger." The scene of *Manuel* is laid at Cordova, where the murder of the young Alonzo, son to Manuel (Kean), is procured by his kinsman, De Zelos (Rae). Manuel accuses De Zelos of the crime. The charge is tried by battle, and Torrismond defends his father's innocence. At first no champion appears for Manuel; then a stranger, who proves to be Almorad, the hired assassin of Alonzo, rides into the lists on his behalf, and is killed by Torrismond. In act v. sc. 3—the last—Almorad, at the moment of death, confesses the crime; De Zelos stabs himself; and Manuel dies: "Oh, I am "sick with death! (*staggering among the bodies*). Alonzo!—"Victoria!—I call, and none answer me. I stagger up and down "—an old man—and none to guide me—not one—(*takes Victoria's* "*hand*)—Cold—cold!—that was an ice-bolt!—I shiver—It grows "—very dark—Alonzo!—Victoria!—very—very dark—(*dies*)."

Digitized by Google

some trickery, in a masque or vizor) fight his own battle, instead of employing Molineux as his champion; and, after defeating Torrismond, have made him spare the son of his enemy, by some revulsion of feeling, not incompatible with a character of extravagant and distempered emotions. But as it is, what with the Justiza, and the ridiculous conduct of the whole *dram. pers.* (for they are all as mad as Manuel, who surely must have had greater interest with a corrupt bench than a distant relation and heir presumptive, somewhat suspect of homicide), I do not wonder at its failure. As a play, it is impracticable; as a poem, no great things. Who was the "Greek "that grappled with Glory naked?"[1] the Olympic wrestler? or Alexander the Great, when he ran stark round the tomb of t'other fellow?[2] or the Spartan[3] who was fined by the Ephori for fighting without his armour? or who? And as to "flinging off life like a garment," *hélas!* that's in *Tom Thumb*—see king Arthur's soliloquy:[4]—

> "Life's a mere rag, not worth a prince's wearing;
> I'll cast it off."

1. *Manuel*, act i. sc. 3—

> "We charged in death;
> Flung life away, as an incumbering garment;
> And, like the *Greek*, grappled with Glory *naked!*"

2. "Achilles, whose grave he (Alexander) anointed with oile, "and ranne naked about it with his familiars, according to the "ancient custome of funerals. Then he covered it with nosegaies "and flowers, saying, that Achilles was happy, who while he lived "had a faithfull friend, and after his death an excellent herauld to "sing his praise."—North's *Plutarch* (ed. 1631), p. 680.

3. Isadas was crowned for his valour, but fined 1000 drachmas for going to battle before the legal age, and without the regular accoutrements of a soldier—*μὴ τὰ ἐπιχώρια ἔχων ὅπλα* (Ælian, *V. H.*, vi. 3). See also Plutarch's *Lives*, "Agesilaos," xxxiv.

4. In Fielding's *Tom Thumb*, act ii. sc. 8, King Arthur says—

> "Sure never was so sad a king as I,
> My life is worn as ragged as a coat
> A beggar wears; a prince should put it off."

Digitized by Google

And the stage-directions—"Staggers among the bodies;" —the slain are too numerous, as well as the blackamoor knight-penitent being one too many: and De Zelos is such a shabby Monmouth Street[1] villain, without any redeeming quality—Stap my vitals! Maturin seems to be declining into Nat. Lee. But let him try again; he has talent, but not much taste. I 'gin to fear, or to hope, that Sotheby, after all, is to be the Æschylus of the age, unless Mr. Shiel[2] be really worthy his success. The

Similar lines occur in Dryden's *Love Triumphant*, act iv. sc. 1—

"You'd been more kind
To take my life, for I would throw it off;
Dishonoured as I am, 'tis worn to rags,
Not worth a prince's wearing."

1. Monmouth Street, now partly Dudley Street, partly Shaftesbury Avenue, was celebrated for second-hand clothes. "Ever since I "knew the world," writes Lady M. Wortley Montagu to Lady Bute, June 22, 1750 (*Letters*, ed. 1893, vol. ii. p. 194), "Irish patents "have been hung out to sale, like the laced and embroidered coats "in Monmouth Street, and bought up by the same sort of people; "I mean those who had rather wear shabby finery than no finery "at all." Moore (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. ii. p. 243) says that Bowles was "most amusing about his purchase of a great coat once in "Monmouth Street, which while in the shop he took for blue, but "which on his appearance in the sunshine he found to be a glaring "glossy green. His being met in this coat by a great Church "dignitary, etc., etc."

2. Richard Lalor Sheil (1791–1851) succeeded with his second tragedy, *The Apostate*, produced at Covent Garden, May 3, 1817, with C. Kemble as "Hemeya," Young as "Malec," Macready as "Pescara," and Miss O'Neill as "Florinda."

Murray, writing to Byron, May 13, 1817 (*Memoir of John Murray*, vol. i. pp. 384, 385), says, "Mr. Sheil, the author of *Adelaide*, "has had most extraordinary success on the stage with his tragedy "called *The Apostate*, merely from forming a series of interesting "situations. I read it with Mr. Gifford in MS., and we both "thought it impossible it could succeed. I went, fully convinced "that it would be damned; but nothing could exceed the applause "which it drew throughout. It had the advantage of giving four "exceedingly appropriate characters to C. Kemble, Macready, Young, "and Miss O'Neil; neither of whom ever had an opportunity of "acting better. Its success has been complete, and it must be "acted as long as four good actors can be brought together."

Sheil's *Evadne, or the Statue* was produced with great success at Covent Garden, February 10, 1819.

Digitized by Google

more I see of the stage, the less I would wish to have any thing to do with it; as a proof of which, I hope you have received the 3[d] of *M[anfre]d* which will at least prove that I wish to steer very clear of the possibility of being put into scenery. I sent it from Rome.

I returned the proof of Tasso. By the way, have you never received a translation of St. Paul which I sent you, *not* for publication, before I went to Rome?

I am at present on the Brenta. Opposite is a Spanish marquis, ninety years old; next his casino is a Frenchman's,—besides the natives; so that, as somebody said the other day, we are exactly one of Goldoni's comedies (*La Vedova Scaltra*[1]), where a Spaniard, English, and Frenchman are introduced: but we are all very good neighbours, Venetians, etc., etc., etc.

I am just getting on horseback for my evening ride, and a visit to a physician, who has an agreeable family, of a wife and four unmarried daughters, all under eighteen, who are friends of Signora Segati and enemies to nobody. There are, and are to be, besides, Conversaziones and I know not what, at a Countess Labbia's and I know not whom. The weather is mild; the thermometer 110 in the *Sun* this day, and 80 odd in the shade.

Yours,

B.

1. Carlo Goldoni (1707–1793), the "Italian Molière," wrote 150 comedies. His *Bourru bienfaisant* was composed for the marriage of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette. The three characters in *La Vedova Scaltra*, referred to by Byron, are "Milord Runebif," "Monsieur le Blau," and "Don Alvaro di Castiglia."

Digitized by Google

## 659.—To John Murray.

La Mira, near Venice, June 17, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—It gives me great pleasure to hear of Moore's success—and the more so that I never doubted that it would be complete. Whatever good you can tell me of him and his poem will be most acceptable: I feel very anxious indeed to receive it. I hope that he is as happy in his fame and reward as I wish him to be; for I know no one who deserves both more—if any so much.

Now to business our own. For the drama I required three hundred guineas, and desire no more, and for the other—three hundred guineas, and will take no less. When you say that the Drama is of the same length, and will form the same-sized publication as most of the preceding, it is probable that you will charge the same price to the purchaser, and in that case (unless the publication fails altogether) will probably be not less a gainer than upon the former. At least it seems that you can hardly be a loser—when the author's demand has not been a *third* of what you have already paid for productions of the like calibre. Do you mean to say that it is dearer or shorter than Mr. R.'s *Jaqueline*? or than my *Lara*? or than *The Giaour*? or the *Bride*? Or do you mean to say that it is inferior to these as Poetry? or that its dramatic form renders it less susceptible of profit? I will tell you that to you, from its being the first poem of mine in that form, it must to a certain degree be more advantageous, as far as an object of curiosity, and although it is not a drama properly—but a dialogue, still it contains poetry and passion—although I by no means look on it as the best—or conceive that it will be the most fortunate of compositions by the same writer.

When therefore you talk to me as of its being a dear

Digitized by Google

purchase, I answer you in so many words, that if I had not named the prior price (with which by the way I was satisfied and had no wish to enlarge) *you* would yourself have offered me a greater, and, if you would not, I could find those who would.

As to the other poem I look upon that as good of its kind, and the price not at all out of proportion to what writers require and obtain.

You are to print in what form you please—that is your concern; as far as your connection with myself has gone, you are the best judge, how far you have lost or gained—probably sometimes one and sometimes the other, but when you come to me with your "*can*" and talk to me about the copy of *Manfred* as if the "force of "purchase would no further go—to *make* a book he "separates the *two*," I say unto you, verily, it is not so; or, as the Foreigner said to the Waiter, after asking him to bring a glass of water, to which the man answered "I will, sir,"—"You *will!*—God damn,—I say, you "*mush!*" And I will submit this to the decision of any person or persons to be appointed by both, on a fair examination of the circumstances of this as compared with the preceding publications. So there's for you. There is always some row or other previously to all our publications: it should seem that, on approximating, we can never quite get over the natural antipathy of author and bookseller, and that more particularly the ferine nature of the latter must break forth.

You are out about the third (*sic*) Canto: I have not done, nor designed, a line of continuation to that poem. I was too short a time at Rome for it, and have no thoughts of recommencing. But if I ever do, I will put it to market to the best bidder and will desert at once to the "*Row*," if you come over me with your

Digitized by Google

pitiful-hearted speeches about "can" and "not," of which if you are not ashamed, you deserve to be the publisher of *Saul* on your Sole account—(paying the author five pounds copyright) with all expenses for ever, now, and to posterity.

I cannot well explain to you by letter what I conceive to be the origin of Mrs. Leigh's notion about *Tales of my Landlord;* but it is some points of the characters of Sir E. Manley and Burley, as well as one or two of the jocular portions, on which it is founded, probably.

If you have received Dr. Polidori, as well as a parcel of books, and you can be of use to him, be so. I never was much more disgusted with any human production than with the eternal nonsense, and *tracasseries*, and emptiness, and ill humour, and vanity of that young person; but he has some talent, and is a man of honour, and has dispositions of amendment, in which he has been aided by a little subsequent experience, and may turn out well. Therefore, use your government interest for him, for he is improved and improvable.

Yours ever truly,

B.

## 660.—To John Murray.[1]

Venice, La Mira, June 18, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Enclosed is a letter to *Dr.* Holland[2] from Pindemonte. Not knowing the Doctor's address, I am desired to inquire, and perhaps, being a literary man, you will know or discover his haunt near some populous churchyard. I have written to you a scolding letter—I believe, upon a misapprehended passage in your letter—

1. For Stendhal's account of Byron at Venice, see Appendix IV.
2. Henry (afterwards Sir Henry) Holland (1788–1873). (See *Letters*, vol. i. p. 247, *note*.)

Digitized by Google

but never mind: it will do for next time, and you will surely deserve it. Talking of doctors reminds me once more to recommend to you one who will not recommend himself,—the Doctor Polidori. If you can help him to a publisher, do; or, if you have any sick relation, I would advise his advice: all the patients he had in Italy are dead—Mr. Hope's son, Mr. Horner, and Lord Guilford, whom he embowelled (*sic*) with great success at Pisa.

The present L^d^ Guilford, who was the charlatan Frederic North, and the Lady Westmoreland, will, I hope, do something for him; it is a pity the last don't keep him. I think he would suit her; he is a very well looking man, and it would not be for her discredit.

Remember me to Moore, whom I congratulate. How is Rogers? How does he look? eh? and what is become of Campbell and all t'other fellows of the Druid order? I got Maturin's Bedlam at last, but no other parcel; I am in fits for the tooth-powder, and the magnesia. I want some of Burkitt's *Soda* powders. Will you tell Mr. Kinnaird that I have written him two letters on pressing business (about Newstead, etc.), to which I humbly solicit his attendance. I am just returned from a gallop along the banks of the Brenta—time, sunset.

Yours,

B.

## 661.—To John Murray.

La Mira, near Venice, July 1, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Since my former letter, I have been working up my impressions into a 4^th^ Canto of *Childe Harold*,[1] of which I have roughened off about rather better than thirty stanzas, and mean to go on; and probably to

1. *Childe Harold*, Canto IV., was published April 28, 1818. The original draft of the poem bears Byron's endorsement—

Digitized by Google

make this "Fytte" the concluding one of the poem, so that you may propose against the Autumn to draw out the Conscription for 1818. You must provide monies, as this new resumption bodes you certain disbursements; somewhere about the end of September or October, I propose to be under way (*i.e.* in the press); but I have no idea yet of the probable length or calibre of the canto, or what it will be good for; but I mean to be as mercenary as possible, an example (I do not mean of any individual in particular, and least of all any person or persons of our mutual acquaintance) which I should have followed in my youth, and I might still have been a prosperous gentleman.

No tooth-powder, no packet of letters, no recent tidings of you.

Mr. Lewis is at Venice, and I am going up to stay a week with him there—as it is one of his enthusiasms also to like the city.

I stood in Venice, on the "Bridge of Sighs;"
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of { an / the } Enchanter's wand:
A thousand Years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times when many a subject land
Looked to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her Seventy Isles.[1]

"Venice and La Mira on the Brenta,
Copied, August, 1817.
Begun, June 26. Finished, July 29th."

But the canto, which was at first 130 stanzas, was subsequently increased to 186 stanzas. (See *Poems*, ed. 1898, vol. ii. p. 313.)

1. "The lyre of Lord Byron," writes John Scott (*Sketches, etc.*,

Digitized by Google

The "Bridge of Sighs" (*i.e. Ponte dei sospiri*) is that which divides, or rather joins, the palace of the Doge to the prison of the state. It has two passages: the criminal went by the one to judgement, and returned by the other to death, being strangled in a chamber adjoining, where there was a mechanical process for the purpose.

This is the first stanza of the new canto; and now for a line of the second:[1]—

> In Venice, Tasso's echo is no more,
> And silent rows the songless gondolier,
> Her palaces, etc., etc.

You know that formerly the gondoliers sang always, and Tasso's *Gerusalemme* was their ballad.[2] Venice is built on seventy-two islands.

*in the French Provinces, Switzerland, and Italy*, 1821, p. 273), "has a peculiar propriety in commencing his poem, because the "Bridge of Sighs is the finest spot for a prospect, where Venice "really seems rising like water-columns from the sea."

1. Now stanza iii.

2. For Hobhouse's note on the singing of the gondoliers, and their chaunt of alternate stanzas of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, see *Poems*, ed. 1898, vol. ii. pp. 467–472. Compare *Rhymes*, by William Stewart Rose (1837, pp. 1, 2)—

> "And I rhyme but to cheer a lonely ride;
> As it is said of old 'by such as have
> Swam in a gondola' on Adria's wave,
> Through the long night light-hearted gondoleer
> Was used to cheat his wonted labour, ere
> Upon the masquing city, like a spell,
> The moody Austrian's leaden sceptre fell;
> To snatches of traditionary tune,
> Oaring his sable barque by broad lagoon,
> Or *rio* silvered by Italian moon."

So also Rogers, in "The Gondola" (*Italy*)—

> "A Gondolier lay singing; and he sung,
> As in the time when Venice was herself,
> Of Tancred and Erminia. On our oars

Digitized by Google

There! there's a brick of your new Babel! and now, sirrah! what say you to the sample?

Yours most sincerely,

B.

P.S.—I shall write again by and bye.

## 662.—To John Murray.

La Mira, near Venice, July 8, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—If you can convey the enclosed letter to its address, or discover the person to whom it is directed, you will confer a favour upon the Venetian creditor of a deceased Englishman. This epistle is a dun to his Executor, for house-rent. The name of the insolvent defunct is, or was, *Porter Valter*, according to the account of the plaintiff, which I rather suspect ought to be *Walter Porter*, according to our mode of collocation. If you are acquainted with any dead man of the like name a good deal in debt, pray dig him up, and tell him that "a pound "of his fair flesh" or the ducats are required, and that "if you deny them, fie upon your law!" [1]

I hear nothing more from you about Moore's poem —Rogers's looks—or other literary phenomena; but to-morrow, being post-day, will bring perhaps some tidings. I write to you with people talking Venetian all about, so that you must not expect this letter to be all English.

> We rested; and the verse was verse divine!
> We could not err—Perhaps he was the last—
> For none took up the strain, none answer'd him;
> And, when he ceased, he left upon my ear
> A something like the dying voice of Venice!"

1. *Merchant of Venice*, act iv. sc. 1—

> "If you deny me, fye upon your law."

Digitized by Google

The other day, I had a squabble on the highway, as follows:—I was riding pretty quickly from Dolo home about 8 in the evening, when I passed a party of people in a hired carriage, one of whom, poking his head out of the window, began bawling to me in an inarticulate but insolent manner; I wheeled my horse round, and overtaking, stopped the coach, and said, "Signor, have you "any commands for me?" He replied, impudently as to manner, "No." I then asked him what he meant by that unseemly noise, to the discomfiture of the passers-by. He replied by some piece of impertinence, to which I answered by giving him a violent slap in the face. I then dismounted, (for this passed at the window, I being on horseback still,) and opening the door desired him to walk out, or I would give him another. But the first had settled him except as to words, of which he poured forth a profusion in blasphemies, swearing that he would go to the police and avouch a battery sans provocation. I said he lied, and was a * *, and if he did not hold his tongue, should be dragged out and beaten anew. He then held his tongue. I of course told him my name and residence, and defied him to the death, if he were a gentleman, or not a gentleman, and had the inclination to be genteel in the way of combat. He went to the police; but there having been bystanders in the road,—particularly a soldier, who had seen the business,—as well as my servant, notwithstanding the oaths of the coachman and five insides besides the plaintiff, and a good deal of perjury on all sides, his complaint was dismissed, he having been the aggressor; —and I was subsequently informed that, had I not given him a blow, he might have been had into durance.

So set down this,—"that in Aleppo once" I "beat a



Digitized by Google

"Venetian;" [1] but I assure you that he deserved it, for I am a quiet man, like Candide, though with somewhat of his fortune in being forced to forego my natural meekness every now and then.

Yours,

B.

## 663.—To John Murray.

Venice, July 9, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I have got the sketch and extracts from *Lallah Rookh*, which I humbly suspect will knock up *Ilderim*, and shew young gentlemen some thing more than having been across a Camel's hump is necessary to write a good Oriental tale. The plan, as well as the extract I have seen, please me very much indeed, and I feel impatient for the whole.

With regard to the critique on *Manfred*,[2] you have been in such a devil of a hurry, that you have only sent me the half: it breaks off at page 294. Send me the rest; and also page 270, where there is "an account of

1. *Othello*, act v. sc. 2—

> "And say, besides—that in Aleppo once
> Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
> Beat a Venetian," etc.

2. Blackwood's *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* for June, 1817, contains, on pp. 270–273, a "Sketch of a Tradition related by a "Monk in Switzerland." In the introduction to this (p. 270) the author says, "Having just read Lord Byron's drama, *Manfred*, there "appears to me such a striking coincidence in some characteristic "features between the story of that performance and the Swiss "tradition, that, without further comment, I extract the latter from "my journal, and send it for your perusal." The same number contains (pp. 289–295) a review of *Manfred*. Murray had not sent Byron pages 295, 296, because on p. 296 began some "analytical "notices" of No. 32 of the *Quarterly Review*. The missing page (295) gives quotations from, and an analysis of, the last act of *Manfred*, remarking on the versification, noticing its violation of rule, and speaking of Byron's imperfect knowledge of blank verse.

Digitized by Google

"the supposed origin of this dreadful story,"—in which, by the way, whatever it may be, the conjecturer is out, and knows nothing of the matter. I had a better origin than he can devise or divine, for the soul of him.

You say nothing of *Manfred's* luck in the world; and I care not—he is one of the best of my misbegotten, say what they will.

I got at last an extract, but *no parcels*. They will come, I suppose, some time or other. I am come up to Venice for a day or two to bathe, and am just going to take a swim in the Adriatic; so good evening—the post waits.

Yours sincerely,

B.

P.S.—Pray, was Manfred's speech to *the Sun* still retained in Act 3[d]? I hope so: it was one of the best in the thing, and better than the Colosseum. I have done 56 stanzas of Canto fourth, *Childe Harold;* so down with your ducats.

## 664.—To Thomas Moore.

La Mira, Venice, July 10, 1817.

Murray, the Mokanna[1] of booksellers, has contrived to send me extracts from *Lalla Rookh* by the post. They are taken from some magazine, and contain a

1. Byron may be thinking of *Lalla Rookh*, and the lines in which the Veiled Mokanna says—

> "That Prophet ill sustains his holy call,
> Who finds not Heavens to suit the tastes of all;
> Houris for boys, omniscience for sages,
> And wings and glories for all ranks and ages."

*Lalla Rookh, an Oriental Romance*, dedicated to Rogers, was published in 1817.

Digitized by Google

short outline and quotations from the two first Poems. I am very much delighted with what is before me, and very thirsty for the rest. You have caught the colours as if you had been in the rainbow, and the tone of the East is perfectly preserved. I am glad you have changed the title from "Persian Tale." * * * *

I suspect you have written a devilish fine composition, and I rejoice in it from my heart; because "the "Douglas and the Percy both together are confident "against a world in arms."[1] I hope you won't be affronted at my looking on us as "birds of a feather;" though, on whatever subject you had written, I should have been very happy in your success.

There is a simile of an orange-tree's "flowers and "fruits," which I should have liked better if I did not believe it to be a reflection on * * *.[2]

Do you remember Thurlow's poem to Sam—"*When* "Rogers;"[3] and that damned supper at Rancliffe's that ought to have been a *dinner*?[4] "Ah, Master Shallow, we "have heard the chimes at midnight."[5] But,

My boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea;
But, before I go, Tom Moore,
Here's a double health to thee!

Here's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate;

1. *Henry IV.*, Part I. act v. sc. 1.
2. "Just then beneath some orange trees,
Whose fruit and blossoms in the breeze
Were wantoning together free,
Like Age at play with Infancy."
*Lalla Rookh* ("Paradise and the Peri").
3. See *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 211, *note* 1.
4. See *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 79, *note* 1.
5. *Henry IV.*, Part II. act iii. sc. 2.

Digitized by Google

And whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the ocean roar around me,
Yet it still shall bear me on;
Though a desert should surround me,
It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,
As I gasp'd upon the brink,
Ere my fainting spirit fell,
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,
The libation I would pour
Should be—peace with thine and mine,
And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

This should have been written fifteen moons ago—the first stanza was.[1] I am just come out from an hour's swim in the Adriatic; and I write to you with a black-eyed Venetian girl before me, reading Boccaccio. * * *

Last week I had a row on the road (I came up to Venice from my casino, a few miles on the Paduan road, this blessed day, to bathe) with a fellow in a carriage, who was impudent to my horse. I gave him a swinging box on the ear, which sent him to the police, who dismissed his complaint. Witnesses had seen the transaction. He first shouted, in an unseemly way, to frighten my palfry. I wheeled round, rode up to the window, and asked him what he meant. He grinned, and said some foolery, which produced him an immediate slap in the face, to his utter discomfiture. Much blasphemy ensued, and some menace, which I stopped by

1. The lines were partly written in April, 1816.

Digitized by Google

dismounting and opening the carriage door, and intimating an intention of mending the road with his immediate remains, if he did not hold his tongue. He held it.

Monk Lewis is here—"how pleasant!"[1] He is a very good fellow, and very much yours. So is Sam—so is every body—and amongst the number,

Yours ever,

B.

P.S.—What think you of *Manfred?* * * * *

## 665.—To John Murray.

La Mira, near Venice, July 15, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I have finished (that is, written—the file comes afterwards) ninety and eight stanzas of the fourth canto, which I mean to be the concluding one; it will probably be about the same length as the *third*, being already of the dimensions of the first or second cantos. I look upon parts of it as very good, that is, if the three former are good, but this we shall see; and at any rate, good or not, it is rather a different style from the last—less metaphysical—which, at any rate, will be a variety. I sent you the shaft of the column as a specimen the other day, *i.e.* the first stanza. So you may be thinking of its arrival towards Autumn, whose winds will not be the only ones to be raised, if *so be as how that* it is ready by that time.

I lent Lewis, who is at Venice (in or on the Canalaccio, the Grand Canal,) your extracts from *Lalla Rookh* and *Manuel*, and, out of contradiction, it may be, he likes

1. "An allusion (such as often occurs in these letters) to an "anecdote with which he had been amused" (Moore).

Digitized by Google

the last, and is not much taken with the first of these performances. Of *Manuel*, I think, with the exception of a few capers, it is as heavy a Nightmare as was ever bestrode by Indigestion.

Of the extracts I can but judge as extracts, and I prefer the "Peri" to the "Silver Veil." He seems not so much at home in his versification of the "Silver Veil," and a little embarrassed with his horrors; but the Conception of the Character of the Impostor is fine, and the plan of great scope for his genius,—and I doubt not that, as a whole, it will be very Arabesque and beautiful.

Your late epistle is not the most abundant in information, and has not yet been succeeded by any other; so that I know nothing of your own concerns, or of any concerns, and as I never see or hear from any body but yourself who does not tell me something as disagreeable as possible, I should not be sorry to hear from you: and as it is not very probable,—if I can, by any device or possible arrangement with regard to my personal affairs, so manage it,—that I shall return soon, or reside ever in England, all that you tell me will be all I shall know or enquire after, as to our beloved realm of Grub Street, and the black brethren and blue Sisterhood of that extensive Suburb of Babylon. Have you had no new Babe of Literature sprung up to replace the dead, the distant, the tired, and the *re*tired? no prose, no verse, no *nothing*?

No infant Sotheby, whose dauntless head
Translates, misunderstood, a deal of German;[1]
No city Wordsworth, more admired than read,
No drunken Coleridge with a new "Lay Sermon."[2]

1. Sotheby's translation of Wieland's *Oberon* appeared in 1798.
2. Coleridge published his first "Lay Sermon," *The Statesman's*

Digitized by Google

Talking of Sotheby, you will perceive that I more than once make dishonourable mention of that venerable Mokanna. Hear then, Why, besides my previous impartial opinion of his being a tiresome man.

Some time ago I received the Italian edition of some poems of mine with an *anonymous* note, containing some gratuitously impertinent remarks, which might or might not be well founded, but have been sent in that manner. This is no great matter, because I suppose in my life I have received at least two hundred anonymous letters—aye, three hundred—of love, literature, advice, abuse, menace, or consolation, upon all topics, and in every shape.

But I happen to know the hand of the man of age, and the style (I would swear to the word "*effulgence*" and two or three other blue technicals), because I was once in doleful correspondence about his un-damned tragedy, *Ivan*, when I was a Committer of Drury Lane Theatre. I say, says I, I know the hand, and I think it a piece of impertinence in him to write *to* me at all unless on business; and it is at any rate usual for well-conditioned persons to put their names. So let him look to it: he had better have written to the Devil a criticism upon hell-fire. I will raise him such a Samuel for his *Saul* as will astonish him without the Witch of Endor. An old tiresome blockhead, blundering through Italy, without a word of the language, or of any language except the wretched affectations of our own which he called English, to come upon poor dear quiet me with his nonsense! but never mind: we shall see.

If he had attacked me in print, that's all fair;—"*foul* "is fair,"[1] at least among authors;—but to come upon me

*Manual*, in 1816. His second, *On the Existing Distresses and Discontents*, appeared in 1817.

1. *Macbeth*, act i. sc. 1.

Digitized by Google

with his petty, mincing, paltry, dirty notes, and nameless, as he will be himself a hundred years hence,—sunburn me, if I don't stick a pin through this old Blue-bottle! 'Gin you doubt, ask him; and if he don't own it, why, I will read his next or last work through—that's all.

Since this epistle was begun, the stanzas of canto fourth have jumped to *one hundred and four;* and such stanzas! By St. Anthony (who has a church at my elbow, and I like to be neighbourly) some of them are the right thing!

Yours,

B.

## 666.—To John Murray.

Venice, July 20, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I write to give you notice that I have completed the 4th and *ultimate* Canto of *Childe Harold.* It consists of 126 stanzas, and is consequently the longest of the four.

It is yet to be copied and polished; and the notes are to come, of which it will require more than the *third* Canto, as it necessarily treats more of works of art than of Nature. It shall be sent towards Autumn;—and now for our barter. What do you bid? eh? you shall have samples, an it so please you: but I wish to know what I am to expect (as the saying is) in these hard times, when poetry does not let for half its value. If you are disposed to do what Mrs. Winifred Jenkins[1] calls "the handsome thing," I may perhaps throw you some odd matters to the lot,—translations, or slight originals; there is no saying what may be on the anvil between this and the booking season. Recollect that it

1. Miss Tabitha Bramble's maid in *Humphrey Clinker.*

Digitized by Google

is the *last* Canto, and completes the work; whether as good as the others, I cannot judge, in course—least of all as yet,—but it shall be as little worse as I can help. I may, perhaps, give some little gossip in the notes as to the present state of Italian literati and literature, being acquainted with some of their *Capi*—men as well as books;—but this depends upon my humour at the time; so now, pronounce: I say nothing.

When you have got the whole 4 cantos, I think you might venture on an edition of the whole poem in quarto, with spare copies of the two last for the purchasers of the old edition of the first two. There is a hint for you, worthy of the Row; and now, perpend—pronounce.

I have not received a word from you of the fate of *Manfred* or *Tasso*, which seems to me odd, whether they have failed or succeeded.

As this is a scrawl of business, and I have lately written at length and often on other subjects, I can only add that I am,

Yours ever truly,

B.

## 667.—To John Murray.

La Mira, near Venice, August 7, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of the 18th, and, what will please you as it did me, the parcel sent by the good-natured aid and abetment of Mr. Croker, are arrived. —Messrs. Lewis and Hobhouse are here: the former in the same house, the latter a few hundred yards distant.

You say nothing of *Manfred*, from which its failure may be inferred; but I think it odd you should not say

Digitized by Google

so at once. I know nothing, and hear absolutely nothing, of any body or any thing in England; and there are no English papers, so that all you say will be news—of any person, or thing, or things. I am at present very anxious about Newstead, and sorry that Kinnaird is leaving England at this minute, though I do not tell him so, and would rather he should have *his* pleasure, although it may not in this instance tend to my profit.

If I understand rightly, you have paid into Morland's[1] 1500 *pounds:* as the agreement in the paper is two thousand *guineas*, there will remain therefore *six* hundred *pounds*, and not five hundred, the odd hundred being the extra to make up the specie. Six hundred and thirty pounds will bring it to the like for *Manfred* and *Tasso*, making a total of £ twelve hundred and thirty, I believe, for I am not a good calculator. I do not wish to press you, but I tell you fairly that it will be a convenience to me to have it paid as soon as it can be made convenient to yourself.

The new and last canto is 130 Stanzas in length, and may be made more or less. I have fixed no price, even in idea, and have no notion of what it may be good for. There are no metaphysics in it; at least, I think not. Mr. Hobhouse has promised me a copy of Tasso's will, for the notes; and I have some curious things to say about Ferrara, and Parisina's story, and perhaps a farthing candle's worth of light upon the present state of Italian literature. I shall hardly be ready by October; but that don't matter. I have all to copy and correct, and the notes to write.

I do not know whether Scott will like it; but I have

1. Ransom and Morland's Bank, in which Douglas Kinnaird was a partner.

Digitized by Google

called him the "*Ariosto* of the North," in my *text*.[1] *If he should not, say so in time.*

* * * * *

An Italian translation of *Glenarvon*, came lately to be printed at Venice. The Censor (S^r^. Petrotini) refused to sanction the publication till he had seen me upon the subject. I told him that I did not recognise the slightest relation between that book and myself; but that, whatever opinions might be upon that subject, *I* would never prevent or oppose the publication of *any* book, in *any* language, on my own private account; and desired him (against his inclination) to permit the poor translator to publish his labours. It is going forwards in consequence. You may say this, with my compliments, to the author.

Yours ever sincerely,

B.

## 668.—To John Murray.

Venice, August 12, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I have been very sorry to hear of the death of M^e^ de Stael, not only because she had been very kind to me at Copet, but because now I can never requite her. In a general point of view, she will leave a great gap in Society and literature.

1. "The Southern Scott, the minstrel who called forth
A new creation with his magic line,
And, like the Ariosto of the North,
Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth."
*Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza xl.

Scott was a devoted admirer of Ariosto. The comparison was not inappropriate, but Francis Hodgson, in his *Monitor of Childe Harold* (1818), turns it into ridicule. "Walter Scott (*credite "posteri*, or rather *præposteri*) is designated in the Fourth Canto "of *Childe Harold* as 'the Northern Ariosto,' and (droller still) "Ariosto is denominated 'the Southern Scott.' This comes of "mistaking horse-chestnuts for chestnut horses."

Digitized by Google

With regard to death, I doubt that we have any right to pity the dead for their own sakes.

The copies of *Manfred* and *Tasso* are arrived, thanks to Mr. Croker's cover. You have destroyed the whole effect and moral of the poem by omitting the last line of Manfred's speaking;[1] and why this was done, I know not. Why you persist in saying nothing of the thing itself, I am equally at a loss to conjecture. If it is for fear of telling me something disagreeable, you are wrong; because sooner or later I must know it, and I am not so new, nor so raw, nor so inexperienced, as not to be able to bear, not the mere paltry, petty disappointments of authorship, but things more serious,—at least I hope so, and that what you may think irritability is merely mechanical, and only acts like Galvanism on a dead body, or the muscular motion which survives sensation.

If it is that you are out of humour, because I wrote to you a sharp letter, recollect that it was partly from a misconception of your letter, and partly because you did a thing you had no right to do without consulting me.

I have, however, heard good of *Manfred* from two other quarters, and from men who would not be scrupulous in saying what they thought, or what was said; and so "good morrow to you, good Master Lieutenant."[2]

I wrote to you twice about the 3$^{d}$ [*sic* in MS.] canto, which you will answer at your pleasure. Mr. Hobhouse and I have come up for a day to the city; Mr. Lewis is gone to England; and I am,

Yours ever,

B.

1. "Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die."
2. "Good morrow, good lieutenant."
*Othello*, act iii. sc. 1.

Digitized by Google

## 669.—To John Murray.

La Mira, near Venice, August 21, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I take you at your word about Mr. Hanson, and will feel obliged if you will *go* to him, and request Mr. Davies also to visit him by my desire, and repeat that I trust that neither Mr. Kinnaird's absence nor mine will prevent his taking all proper steps to accelerate and promote the sales of Newstead and Rochdale, upon which the whole of my future personal comfort depends. It is impossible for me to express how much any delays upon these points would inconvenience me; and I do not know a greater obligation that can be conferred upon me than the pressing these things upon Hanson, and making him act according to my wishes. I wish you would *speak out*, at least to *me*, and tell me what you allude to by your odd way of mentioning him. All mysteries at such a distance are not merely tormenting but mischievous, and may be prejudicial to my interests; so, pray expound, that I may consult with Mr. Kinnaird when he arrives; and remember that I prefer the most disagreeable certainties to hints and inuendos. The devil take every body: I never can get any person to be explicit about any thing or any body, and my whole life is passed in conjectures of what people mean: you all talk in the style of Caroline Lamb's novels.

It is not Mr. St. John, but *Mr. St. Aubyn*, son of Sir John St. Aubyn. *Polidori* knows him, and introduced him to me. He is of Oxford, and has got my parcel. The Doctor will ferret him out, or ought. The parcel contains many letters, some of Madame de Stael's, and other people's, besides MSS., etc. By G—d, if I find the gentleman, and he don't find the parcel, I will say something he won't like to hear.

Digitized by Google

You want a "civil and delicate declension"[1] for the medical tragedy? Take it—

Dear Doctor,—I have read your play,
Which is a good one in its way,
Purges the eyes, and moves the bowels,
And drenches handkerchiefs like towels
With tears, that, in a flux of grief,
Afford hysterical relief
To shatter'd nerves and quicken'd pulses,
Which your catastrophe convulses.
I like your moral and machinery;
Your plot, too, has such scope for Scenery!
Your dialogue is apt and smart;
The play's concoction full of art;
Your hero raves, your heroine cries,
All stab, and every body dies;
In short, your tragedy would be
The very thing to hear and see;
And for a piece of publication,
If I decline on this occasion,
It is not that I am not sensible
To merits in themselves ostensible,
But—and I grieve to speak it—plays
Are drugs—mere drugs, Sir, nowadays.
I had a heavy loss by *Manuel*,—
Too lucky if it prove not annual,—
And Sotheby, with his damned *Orestes*,
(Which, by the way, the old Bore's best is,)
Has lain so very long on hand
That I despair of all demand;

1. "By the way," writes Murray to Byron, August 5, 1817 (*Memoir, etc.*, vol. i. p. 386), "Polidori has sent me his tragedy! Do "me the kindness to send by return of post a *delicate* declension of "it, which I engage faithfully to copy."

Digitized by Google

I've advertized,—but see my books,
Or only watch my Shopman's looks;—
Still *Ivan*, *Ina*, and such lumber,
My back-shop glut,—my shelves encumber.
There's Byron too, who once did better,
Has sent me—folded in a letter—
A sort of—it's no more a drama
Than *Darnley*, *Ivan*, or *Kehama*:
So altered since last year his pen is,
I think he's lost his wits at Venice,
* * * * *
* * * * *
In short, sir, what with one and t'other,
I dare not venture on another.
I write in haste; excuse each blunder;
The Coaches through the street so thunder!
My Room's so full; we've Gifford here
Reading MSS., with Hookham Frere,
Pronouncing on the nouns and particles
Of some of our forthcoming articles,
The *Quarterly*—Ah, sir, if you
Had but the Genius to review!—
A smart Critique upon St. Helena,
Or if you only would but tell in a
Short compass what——but, to resume;
As I was saying, Sir, the Room—
The Room's so full of wits and bards,
Crabbes, Campbells, Crokers, Freres, and Wards,
And others, neither bards nor wits:—
My humble tenement admits
All persons in the dress of Gent.,
From Mr. Hammond[1] to Dog Dent.[2]

1. George Hammond (1763–1853) was a distinguished diplomatist, who twice (1795–1806 and 1807–1809) held the office of Under

Digitized by Google

A party dines with me today,
All clever men who make their way:
Crabbe, Malcolm, Hamilton, and Chantrey,[3]
Are all partakers of my pantry.
They're at this moment in discussion
On poor De Staël's late dissolution.
Her book, they say, was in advance—
Pray Heaven! she tell the truth of France!
'Tis said she certainly was married
To Rocca, and had twice miscarried,
No—not miscarried, I opine,—
But brought to bed at forty-nine.
Some say she died a Papist; Some
Are of opinion *that's* a Hum;
I don't know that—the fellow, Schlegel,
Was very likely to inveigle
A dying person in compunction
To try the extremity of Unction.
But peace be with her! for a woman
Her talents surely were uncommon.
Her Publisher (and Public too)
The hour of her demise may rue—
For never more within his shop he—
Pray—was not she interred at Coppet?

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. An intimate friend of Canning, he was associated with the foundation of the *Anti-Jacobin* and the *Quarterly Review*. In the drawing-room of Albemarle Street, he was Murray's "chief 4-o'clock man," until his appointment as one of the Committee to arbitrate on the claims of British subjects arising out of the French Revolution compelled him to make Paris his head-quarters.

2. John Dent, M.P., F.S.A., banker, was nicknamed "Dog "Dent," because he was concerned in the introduction of the Dog-tax Bill in 1796. In 1802 he introduced a Bill to abolish bull-baiting.

3. This and the following line were added subsequently (see p. 176).



Digitized by Google

Thus run our time and tongues away;—
But, to return, Sir, to your play;
Sorry, Sir, but I cannot deal,
Unless 'twere acted by O'Neill.
My hands are full—my head so busy,
I'm almost dead—and always dizzy;
And so, with endless truth and hurry,
Dear Doctor, I am yours,

JOHN MURRAY.

August, 1817.

P.S.—I've done the 4th and last Canto, which mounts to 133 stanzas. I desire you to name a price; if you don't, *I* will; so I advise you in time.

Yours, etc.

There will be a good many notes.

## 670.—To John Hanson.

Venice, August 26th 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Although I wrote to you some time ago on the same subject, my anxiety induces me to repeat that I hope that neither Mr. Kinnaird's temporary absence nor mine will make any difference in your endeavours to get Newstead sold to the best bidder. My determination on the *sale* is decisive; and it is with great regret that I hear of some delays about that of Rochdale also, which I wish also to have sold for whatever it may bring. I have been too long fed with vain hopes of profit or advantage from its long lawsuit, to trust to the decisions of courts, or the speculations of remote contingencies.

Any sale of both or either of these properties must be far more advantageous to me, if immediate, than any

Digitized by Google

possible future profit or increase of price from delay, since every year till they are sold can but increase my difficulties and add to my debts. If the product of the sales should not do much more than cover the settlement of sixty thousand pounds, after the surplus has been applied to the liquidation of my debts, a part of the income can be set aside for a series of years to the adjustment of the remaining claims.

I trust that neither *you* nor *I* are now so insane as to expect any thing like the price for Newstead which Claughton proposed and could not make good; a *safe sure* and *moderate* purchaser such as Wilson is all we want, and such I trust may still be found.

Pray favour me with a line. Remember me to your family, and believe me,

Yours ever truly,

B.

P.S.—If there is any little balance from the rents (which by the way there should be), let it be sent to my credit through *Messrs. Morlands, bankers, Pall Mall.*

I suppose of course Sir R. Noel has paid the year due last March; if not, *let him* be *made* to pay it instantly. I desire nothing but short accounts with that family.

## 671.—To John Murray.

Sept. 4, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of the 15th has conveyed with its contents the impression of a Seal, to which the "Saracen's Head" is a seraph, and the "Bull and "Mouth" a delicate device. I knew that Calumny had sufficiently *blackened* me of later days, but not that it had given the features as well as complexion of a Negro.

Digitized by Google

Poor Augusta is not less, but rather more, shocked than myself, and says, "people seem to have lost their recol- "lection strangely" when they engraved such a "blacka- "moor." Pray don't seal (at least to me) with such a caricature of the human numskull altogether; and if you don't break the sealcutter's head, at least crack his libel (or likeness, if it should be a likeness) of mine.

Mr. Kinnaird is not yet arrived, but expected. He has lost by the way all the tooth-powder, as a letter from Spa informs me.

By Mr. Rose[1] I received safely, though tardily, magnesia and tooth-powder, *Phrosine* and *Alashtar*![2] I shall clean my teeth with one, and wipe my shoes with the other. Why do you send me such trash—worse than trash, the Sublime of Mediocrity? Thanks for *Lallah*, however, which is good; and thanks for the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly*, both very amusing and well written. *Paris in* 1815,[3] etc.—good. *Modern Greece*[4]—good for nothing; written by some one who has never been there, and not being able to manage the Spenser stanza, has invented a thing of its own, consisting of two elegiac stanzas, a heroic line, and an Alexandrine, twisted on a string. Besides, why "*modern*?" You may say *modern Greeks*, but surely *Greece* itself is rather more ancient than ever it was. Now for business.

You offer 1500 guineas for the new Canto: I won't take it. I ask two thousand five hundred guineas for it, which you will either give or not, as you think proper. It concludes the poem, and consists of 144 stanzas. The

1. See p. 211, *note* 1.

2. *Phrosyne, a Grecian Tale*, and *Alashtar, an Arabian Tale*, both by Henry Gally Knight, were published in 1817.

3. A poem, by the Rev. George Croly (1780–1860), in imitation of *Childe Harold*, published in 1817.

4. *Modern Greece, a Poem*. [By F. D. Hemans.] London, 1817.

Digitized by Google

notes are numerous, and chiefly written by Mr. Hobhouse,[1] whose researches have been indefatigable; and who, I will venture to say, has more real knowledge of Rome and its environs than any Englishman who has been there since Gibbon. By the way to prevent any mistakes, I think it necessary to state the fact that *he*, Mr. H[obhouse], has no interest whatever in the price or profit to be derived from the copyright of either poem or notes, directly or indirectly; so that you are not to suppose that it is by—for—or through him, that I require more for this canto than the preceding.—No: but if Mr. Eustace[2] was to have had two thousand for a poem on Education; if Mr. Moore is to have three thousand for *Lallah*, etc.; if Mr. Campbell is to have three thousand for his prose on poetry[3]—I don't mean to disparage these gentlemen or their labours—but I ask the aforesaid price for mine. You will tell me that their productions are considerably *longer*: very true, and when they shorten them, I will lengthen mine, and ask less. You shall submit the MS. to Mr. Gifford, and any other two gentlemen to be named by you, (Mr. Frere, or Mr. Croker, or whomever you please, except such fellows as your Galley

1. Hobhouse, leaving Byron at Venice, had gone, in December, 1816, to Rome. There he devoted himself to Italian literature, art, and archæology. In July, 1817, he rejoined Byron at La Mira, and for the next five months studied the "best authorities" in the Ducal Library at Venice. During this period he suggested several subjects which Byron treated in the additional stanzas of *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. (See *Poems*, ed. 1898, vol. ii. pp. 314, 315.)

2. The Rev. John Chetwode Eustace, author of *A Classical Tour through Italy*, at the time of his death at Naples, in 1815, was at work on a didactic poem on the *Culture of the Youthful Mind*. Hobhouse, in his *Historical Illustrations to Childe Harold* (ed. 1818, p. 240, *note*), speaks contemptuously of Eustace as a man "who appears never to have seen anything as it is."

3. Thomas Campbell's *Specimens of the British Poets, with Biographical and Critical Notices*, appeared in 1819, in seven volumes 8vo.

Digitized by Google

Knights and Sothebys ;) and if they pronounce this canto to be inferior as a *whole* to the preceding, I will not appeal from their award, but burn the manuscript, and leave things as they are.

Yours very truly,

BYRON.

P.S.—In answer to a former letter, I sent you a short statement of what I thought the state of our present copyright account, viz. six hundred *pounds* still (or lately) due on *Childe Harold*, and six hundred *guineas*, on *Manfred* and *Tasso*, making a total of twelve hundred and thirty pounds. If we agree about the new poem, I shall take the liberty to reserve the choice of the manner in which it should be published, viz. a quarto, certes. If we do not agree, recollect that you have had the refusal.

## 672.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

La Mira, Sept. 12, 1817.

I set out yesterday morning with the intention of paying my respects, and availing myself of your permission to walk over the premises.[1] On arriving at

1. "I Cappuccini," a country-house on the Euganean Hills, near Este, which Hoppner had for some time occupied, and which Byron afterwards rented of him, but never inhabited. Here Shelley was living in October, 1818. Writing to Peacock, and dating his letter "Este," October 8, 1818, he says, "We have been living this last "month near the little town from which I date this letter, in a very "pleasant villa which has been lent to us. . . . Behind us here are "the Euganean hills, not so beautiful as those of the Bagni di "Lucca, with Arquà, where Petrarch's house and tomb are religi- "ously preserved and visited. At the end of our garden is an exten- "sive Gothic castle, now the habitation of owls and bats, where the "Medici family resided before they came to Florence. We see "before us the wide flat plains of Lombardy, in which we see the "sun and moon rise and set, and the evening star, and all golden "magnificence of autumnal clouds" (*Prose Works of Shelley*, ed. H. Buxton Forman, vol. iv. p. 41).

Digitized by Google

Padua, I found that the march of the Austrian troops had engrossed so many horses,[1] that those I could procure were hardly able to crawl; and their weakness, together with the prospect of finding none at all at the post-house of Monselice, and consequently either not arriving that day at Este, or so late as to be unable to return home here the same evening, induced me to turn aside in a second visit to Arqua, instead of proceeding onwards; and even thus I hardly got back in time.

Next week I shall be obliged to be in Venice to meet Lord Kinnaird and his brother, who are expected in a few days. And this interruption, together with that occasioned by the continued march of the Austrians for the next few days, will not allow me to fix any precise period for availing myself of your kindness, though I should wish to take the earliest opportunity. Perhaps, if absent, you will have the goodness to permit one of your servants to show me the grounds and house, or as much of either as may be convenient; at any rate, I shall take the first occasion possible to go over, and regret very much that I was yesterday prevented.

I have the honour to be your obliged, etc.

1. "So great was the demand for horses, on the line of march of "the Austrians, that all those belonging to private individuals were "put in requisition for their use, and Lord Byron himself received "an order to send his for the same purpose. This, however, he "positively refused to do, adding, that if an attempt were made to "take them by force, he would shoot them through the head in the "middle of the road, rather than submit to such an act of tyranny "upon a foreigner who was merely a temporary resident in the "country. Whether his answer was ever reported to the higher "authorities I know not; but his horses were suffered to remain "unmolested in his stables" (Moore).

Digitized by Google

## 673.—To John Murray.

September 15, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I enclose a sheet for correction, if ever you get to another edition. You will observe that the blunder in printing makes it appear as if the Château was *over* St. Gingo, instead of being on the opposite shore of the Lake, over Clarens. So, separate the paragraphs, otherwise my *to*pography will seem as inaccurate as your *ty*pography on this occasion.

The other day I wrote to convey my proposition with regard to the 4th and concluding canto. I have gone over and extended it to one hundred and fifty stanzas, which is almost as long as the two first were originally, and longer by itself than any of the smaller poems except *The Corsair*. Mr. Hobhouse has made some very valuable and accurate notes of considerable length, and you may be sure I will do for the text all that I can to finish with decency. I look upon *Childe Harold* as my best; and as I begun, I think of concluding with it. But I make no resolutions on that head, as I broke my former intention with regard to *The Corsair*. However, I fear that I shall never do better; and yet, not being thirty years of age, for some moons to come, one ought to be progressive as far as Intellect goes for many a good year. But I have had a devilish deal of wear and tear of mind and body in my time, besides having published too often and much already. God grant me some judgement! to do what may be most fitting in that and every thing else, for I doubt my own exceedingly.

I have read *Lallah Rookh*, but not with sufficient attention yet, for I ride about, and lounge, and ponder, and—two or three other things; so that my reading is very desultory, and not so attentive as it used to be. I

Digitized by Google

am very glad to hear of its popularity, for Moore is a very noble fellow in all respects, and will enjoy it without any of the bad feeling which success—good or evil—sometimes engenders in the men of rhyme. Of the poem itself, I will tell you my opinion when I have mastered it: I say of the *poem*, for I don't like the *prose* at all—at all; and in the mean time, the "Fire worshippers" is the best, and the "Veiled Prophet" the worst, of the volume.

With regard to poetry in general,[1] I am convinced, the more I think of it, that he and *all* of us—Scott, Southey, Wordsworth, Moore, Campbell, I,—are all in the wrong, one as much as another; that we are upon a wrong revolutionary poetical system, or systems, not worth a damn in itself, and from which none but Rogers and Crabbe are free; and that the present and next generations will finally be of this opinion. I am the more confirmed in this by having lately gone over some of our classics, particularly *Pope*, whom I tried in this way,—I took Moore's poems and my own and some others, and went over them side by side with Pope's, and I was really astonished (I ought not to have been so) and mortified at the ineffable distance in point of sense, harmony, effect, and even *Imagination*, passion, and *Invention*, between the little Queen Anne's man, and us of the Lower Empire. Depend upon it, it is all Horace then, and Claudian[2] now, among us; and if I had to begin again, I would model myself accordingly. Crabbe's

1. On this paragraph, in the MS. copy of the above letter, is the following note, in the handwriting of Mr. Gifford: "There is more "good sense, and feeling and judgment in this passage, than in any "other I ever read, or Lord Byron wrote."

2. For the poet Claudian, who flourished 395–405, see Mackail's *Latin Literature*, pp. 267–270, and Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (ed. 1862), vol. iv. pp. 63–66.

Digitized by Google

the man, but he has got a coarse and impracticable subject, and Rogers, the Grandfather of living Poetry, is retired upon half-pay, (I don't mean as a Banker),—

Since pretty Miss Jaqueline,
With her nose aquiline,

and has done enough, unless he were to do as he did formerly.

## 674.—To John Murray.

September 17, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I shall send the assignment by Mr. Kinnaird, who is not yet arrived here; but your rectification of guineas does not bring you quite right yet. You said a thousand pounds; it is, however, twelve hundred and thirty pounds, *viz.* a balance of £ six hundred—on the 3d Co. and three hundred gs. *Manfred*, and three hundred *Tasso*, making six hundred and thirty pounds on the latter—according to my Cocker.

As to the time of payment, I repeat that I don't wish to press you; but that, when it suits your convenience, it will not be incompatible with mine. By Messrs. Morland's last account I perceive that a sum, which I imagined to have been from your quarter, came instead from Mr. Hanson, so that it should seem you are more in my books than I thought, for which reason I am thus precise as to items.

Mr. Hobhouse purposes being in England in November; he will bring the 4th Canto with him, notes and all; the text contains one hundred and fifty stanzas, which is long for that measure.

With regard to the "Ariosto of the North," [1] surely

1. Murray (*Memoir*, vol. i. p. 388) wrote to Byron (September 9,

Digitized by Google

their themes, Chivalry, war, and love, were as like as can be; and as to the compliment, if you knew what the Italians think of Ariosto, you would not hesitate about that. But as to their "measures," you forget that Ariosto's is an octave stanza, and Scott's anything but a Stanza. If you think Scott will dislike it, say so, and I expunge. I do not call him the "*Scotch* Ariosto," which would be sad *provincial* eulogy, but the "Ariosto of the "*North*," meaning of all the *countries* that are *not* the *South*.

I have received your enclosed letter from Lady Caroline Lamb, and am truly sorry (as she will one day be) that she is capable of writing such a letter; poor thing! it is a great pity.

As I have recently troubled you rather frequently, I will conclude, repeating that I am

Yours ever very truly,

B.

## 675.—To John Murray.

October 12, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Kinnaird and his brother, Lord K., have been here, and are now gone again. All your missives came, except the tooth-powder, of which I request further supplies, at all convenient opportunities; as also of magnesia and soda-powders, both great luxuries here, and neither to be had good, or indeed hardly at all, of the natives.

In Coleridge's *Life*,[1] I perceive an attack upon the

1817), "By the way, I asked Gifford and some others how Scott "would like to be called the Scottish Ariosto; and no one can "tell why you should call him so, except perhaps on account of his "adopting the same measure."

1. Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* was published in 1817. His

Digitized by Google

then Committee of D. L. Theatre for acting *Bertram*, and an attack upon Maturin's *Bertram* for being acted. Considering all things, this is not very grateful nor graceful on the part of the worthy auto-biographer; and I would answer, if I had *not* obliged him. Putting my own pains to forward the views of Coleridge out of the question, I know that there was every disposition, on the part of the Sub-Committee, to bring forward any production of his, were it feasible. The play he offered, though poetical, did not appear at all practicable, and *Bertram* did;—and hence this long tirade, which is the last chapter of his vagabond life.

As for *Bertram*, Maturin may defend his own-begotten, if he likes it well enough; I leave the Irish clergyman and the new Orator Henley [1] to battle it out between them, satisfied to have done the best I could for *both*. I may say this to *you*, who know it.

Mr. Coleridge may console himself with the "fervour, "—the almost religious fervour" of his and Wordsworth's disciples, as he calls it. If he means that as any proof of their merits, I will find him as much "fervour" in behalf of Richard Brothers [2] and Joanna Southcote [3] as ever gathered over his pages or round his fireside. He is a shabby fellow, and I wash my hands of and after him.

My answer to your proposition about the 4th canto you will have received, and I await yours;—perhaps we may not agree. I have since written a poem (of 84 octave stanzas), humourous, in or after the excellent

famous criticism of Wordsworth's poetry is to be found in chaps. xvii.–xxii., and his review of *Bertram* in chap. xxiii.

1. Byron compares Coleridge to John Henley (1692–1756), whom Pope (*Dunciad*, bk. iii. line 206) calls "Preacher at once, and "Zany of thy age."

2. For Richard Brothers, see *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 35, *note* 1.

3. For Joanna Southcott, see *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 128, *note* 2.

Digitized by Google

manner of Mr. Whistlecraft[1] (whom I take to be Frere), on a Venetian anecdote[2] which amused me:—but till I have your answer, I can say nothing more about it.

Mr. Hobhouse does not return to England in November, as he intended, but will perhaps winter here; and as he is to convey the poem, or poems,—for there may perhaps be more than the two mentioned, (which, by the way, I shall not perhaps include in the same publication or agreement,) I shall not be able to publish so soon as expected; but I suppose there is no harm in the delay.

I have *signed* and sent your former *copyrights* by Mr. Kinnaird, but *not* the *receipt*, because the money is not yet paid. Mr. Kinnaird has a power of attorney to sign for me, and will, when necessary.

Many thanks for the *Edinburgh Review* which is very kind about *Manfred*, and defends its originality,[3] which I

1. *Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work, by William and Robert Whistlecraft, of Stowmarket, in Suffolk, Harness and Collar Makers. Intended to comprise the most interesting particulars relating to King Arthur and his Round Table.* London, 1817. Cantos III. and IV. of the work were printed in 1818.

2. I.e. *Beppo*, published February 28, 1818.

3. Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine* for July, 1817 (pp. 388–395) analyses Marlow's *Faustus*, and compares it to *Manfred*. "It is "suggested, in a late number of the *Edinburgh Magazine*, that the "general conception of *Manfred*, and much of what is excellent in "the manner of its execution, have been borrowed from *The* "*Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*, of Marlow; and a variety of "passages are quoted, which the author considers as similar, and, "in many respects, superior to others in the poem before us. We "cannot agree in the general terms of this conclusion. . . . These, "and many other smooth and fanciful verses in this curious old "drama, prove nothing, we think, against the originality of *Man-*"*fred;* for there is nothing to be found there of the pride, the "abstraction, and the heart-rooted misery in which that originality "consists. Faustus is a vulgar sorcerer, tempted to sell his soul to "the Devil for the ordinary price of sensual pleasure, and earthly "power and glory—and who shrinks and shudders in agony when "the forfeit comes to be exacted. The style, too, of Marlow . . . "is weak and childish compared with the depth and force of much

Digitized by Google

did not know that any body had attacked. I *never read*, and do not know that I ever saw, the *Faustus* of Marlow, and had, and have, no Dramatic works by me in English, except the recent things you sent me; but I heard Mr. Lewis translate verbally some scenes of *Goethe's Faust* (which were some good, and some bad) last summer;—which is all I know of the history of that magical personage; and as to the germs of *Manfred*, they may be found in the Journal which I sent to Mrs. Leigh (part of which you saw) when I went over first the Dent de Jamont (*sic*), and then the Wengeren (*sic*) or Wengeberg Alp and Sheideck and made the giro of the Jungfrau, Shreckhorn, etc., etc., shortly before I left Switzerland. I have the whole scene of *Manfred* before me, as if it was but yesterday, and could point it out, spot by spot, torrent and all.

Of the *Prometheus* of Æschylus[1] I was passionately fond as a boy (it was one of the Greek plays we read thrice a year at Harrow);—indeed that and the *Medea* were the only ones, except the *Seven before Thebes*, which ever much pleased me. As to the *Faustus* of Marlow, I never read, never saw, nor heard of it—at least, thought of it, except that I think Mr. Gifford mentioned, in a note of his which you sent me, something about the catastrophe; but not as having any thing to do with mine, which may or may not resemble it, for any thing I know.

The *Prometheus*, if not exactly in my plan, has always been so much in my head, that I can easily conceive its

"of what we have quoted from Lord Byron" (*Edin. Rev.* for August, 1817, vol. xxviii. pp. 430, 431).

1. "In the tone and pitch of the composition, as well as in the "character of the diction in the more solemn parts, *Manfred* reminds "us more of the *Prometheus* of Æschylus than of any more modern "performance."—*Edin. Rev.*, vol. xxviii. p. 431.

Digitized by Google

influence over all or any thing that I have written;—but I deny Marlow and his progeny, and beg that you will do the same.

If you can send me the paper in question, which the *E[dinburgh] R[eview]* mentions, *do*. The review in the Magazine you say was written by Wilson?[1] it had all the air of being a poet's, and was a very good one. The *Edin. Review* I take to be Jeffrey's own by its friendliness. I wonder they thought it worth while to do so, so soon after the former; but it was evidently with a good motive.

I saw Hoppner the other day, whose country-house

1. Byron refers to an article on *Manfred*, which appeared in Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine* for June, 1817, pp. 289–295, written by John Wilson (1785–1854), the "Christopher North" of *Blackwood*. Wilson began his literary career by winning the Newdigate Prize at Oxford with a poem on Painting, Poetry, and Architecture (1806). Called to the Scottish Bar in 1814, he neglected law for literature. In 1812 he published *The Isle of Palms and other Poems;* in 1816 *The City of the Plague and other Poems*. In 1817 he began his connection with the *Edinburgh Magazine*. Mrs. Oliphant (*William Blackwood and Sons*, vol. i. p. 101) describes the yellow-haired, ruddy-faced, blue-eyed giant, with his bursts of wrath and gaiety, who was one of the frequenters of Blackwood's rooms in Prince's Street. The famous "Chaldee Manuscript," which made the fortune of the *Magazine*, and set all Edinburgh in an uproar, was in a great part his work. Full of wild fun and fighting, written with a careless, rapid brilliancy, which shows itself in his large, scrawly hand, alternately striking and caressing Wordsworth and the Lake School, not sparing even Scott, Wilson's "Noctes Ambrosianæ" became a notable feature in the *Magazine*, for which he wrote continuously from 1817 to 1852. Unlike anything else of their kind, they are, as it were, the Bacchanalian revel of criticism. In 1820 he succeeded Dr. Thomas Brown as Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, and held the post till two years before his death. Besides poetry and criticism, Wilson published several novels: *Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life* (1822), *The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay* (1823), *The Foresters* (1825), etc. All are too delicate in tint, and too deeply coloured by romantic sentimentalism, to resemble real life, and in these respects stand in curious contrast to the work of Miss Ferrier, Lockhart, or John Galt. Politically, Wilson was a Tory, and allowed his politics to bias, or at least embitter, his criticism of the "Cockney School" and other opponents.

Digitized by Google

at Este I have taken for two years. If you come out next summer, let me know in time. Love to Gifford.

Yours ever truly,

B.

"Crabbe, Malcolm, Hamilton, and Chantrey,
Are all partakers of my pantry."

These two lines are omitted in your letter to the Doctor, after—

"All clever men who make their way."

## 676.—To John Murray.

Venice, October 23, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Your two letters are before me, and our bargain is so far concluded. How sorry I am to hear that Gifford is unwell! Pray tell me that he is better: I hope it is nothing but *cold*. As you say his illness originates in cold, I trust it will get no further.

Mr. Whistlecraft has no greater admirer than myself. I have written a story in 89 stanzas, in imitation of him, called *Beppo* (the short name for Giuseppe, that is, the *Joe* of the Italian Joseph,) which I shall throw you into the balance of the 4th Canto to help you round to your money; but you perhaps had better publish it anonymously; but this we will see to by and bye.

In the notes to Canto 4, Mr. Hobhouse has pointed out *several errors* of *Gibbon*.[1] You may depend upon H.'s *research* and accuracy. As to the form, you may print it in what shape you please.

1. *E.g.* as to the circumference of Rome (*Historical Illustrations of the Fourth Canto of Childe Harold*, 1818, pp. 180-182); the tomb of Cæcilia Metella (*ibid.*, p. 204); the condition of the Coliseum (*ibid.*, p. 272); Hadrian's mole (*ibid.*, pp. 300-303), etc.

Digitized by Google

With regard to a future large edition, you may print all, or any thing, except *English Bards*, to the republication of which at *no* time will I consent. I would not reprint them on any consideration. I don't think them good for much, even in point of poetry; and, as to other things, you are to recollect that I gave up the publication on account of the *Hollands*, and I do not think that any time or circumstances can neutralise my suppression. Add to which, that, after being on terms with almost all the bards and Critics of the day, it would be savage at any time, but worst of all *now when in another country* to revive this foolish lampoon.

I am glad that you and the Chancellor clapped an extinguisher on Master Cawthorn. I thought that person's impudence would get him into a scrape.

The Review of *Manfred* came very safely, and I am much pleased with it. It is odd that they should say (that is, somebody in a magazine whom the *Edinburgh* controverts) that it was taken from Marlow's *Faustus*, which I never read nor saw. An American, who came the other day from Germany, told Mr. Hobhouse that *Manfred* was taken from Goethe's *Faust*. The devil may take both the Faustuses, German and English,—I have taken neither.

Will you send to Hanson, and say that he has not written since 9th September?—at least I have had no letter since, to my great surprize.

Will you desire Messrs. Morland to send out whatever additional sums have or may be paid in credit immediately and always to their Venice correspondents? It is two months ago that they sent me out an additional credit for *one thousand pounds*. I was very glad of it, but I don't know how the devil it came; for I can only make out 500 of Hanson's payment, and I had thought



Digitized by Google

the other 500 came from you; but it did not, it seems, as, by yours of the 7th instant, you have only just paid the 1230*l.* balance.

Mr. Kinnaird is on his way home with the assignments. I can fix no time for the arrival of Canto 4th, which depends on the journey of Mr. Hobhouse home; and I do not think that this will be immediate.

Yours in great haste and very truly,

B.

P.S.—Morlands have not yet written to my bankers apprising the payment of your balances: pray desire them to do so.

Ask them about the *previous* thousand—of which I know 500 came from Hanson's—and make out the other 500—that is, whence it came.

## 677.—To Elizabeth, Duchess of Devonshire.[1]

Venice, November 3, 1817.

MADAM,—I was yesterday honoured by your Grace's letter of the 19th ult. The newspapers have, I fear,

1. Lady Elizabeth Hervey (1759–1824), daughter of Frederick, fourth Earl of Bristol, and Bishop of Derry, married, in 1776, John Thomas Foster. Her father, says Walpole to Mann, in December, 1783 (ed. Cunningham, vol. viii. p. 440), though a rich man, "suffers her from indigence to accept £300 a-year as governess to a "natural child" of the Duke of Devonshire. Gibbon was her devoted admirer. In a letter to his stepmother of May 4, 1782 (*Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 15), he speaks of her as "a bewitching "animal." She "has the character," writes Miss Burney (*Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay*, vol. v. p. 255), "of being so "alluring, that Mrs. Holroyd told me it was the opinion of Mr. "Gibbon no man could withstand her, and that, if she chose to "beckon the Lord Chancellor from his woolsack, in full sight of "the world, he could not resist obedience." In 1787 Gibbon surprised her with a proposal of marriage. Though she refused him, he spoke of her as "a mortal for whom the wisest man, historic or "medical, would throw away two or three worlds if he had them in

Digitized by Google

deceived your Grace in common with many others, for, up to my last letters from England, Newstead Abbey had not been sold;—and should it be so at this moment I shall be agreeably surprized.

Amongst the many unpleasant consequences of my residence in Piccadilly, or, rather, of the cause of that residence, I can assure your Grace that I by no means look upon it as the least painful that my inconveniences should have contributed to your's.

Whatever measures Mr. Denen might find it proper

"possession." Her portrait was painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds and by Gainsborough. In 1809 she married the fifth Duke of Devonshire, after whose death, in 1811, she lived abroad. Moore, in 1819 (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. iii. p. 48), found her and Lady Davy "the rival *cicerones* of Rome." Ticknor (*Life*, vol. i. p. 180) writes, "I went to the Duchess of Devonshire's *conversaziones*, as to "a great exchange, to see who was in Rome, and to meet what is "called the world. The Duchess is a good, respectable woman in "her way. She attempts to play the Mæcenas a little too much, it "is true; but, after all, she does a good deal that should be praised, "and will not, I hope, be forgotten. Her excavations in the Forum, "if neither so judicious nor so fortunate as Count Funchal's, are "satisfactory, and a fair beginning. Her *Horace's Journey to Brun-*"*dusium* is a beautiful book, and her *Virgil*, with the best plates "she can get of the present condition of Latium, will be a monu-"ment of her taste and generosity." The two books to which Ticknor alludes were (1) *Horatius Flaccus Quintus: Satyrarum lib.* I, *Satyra v.* (*cum Italiciana versione*), *Romæ de Romanis* (1816), and a second and corrected edition (1818); and (2) *L'Eneide di Virgilio recata in versi italiani da Annibal Caro, Roma de Romanis* (1819).

From the Duchess of Devonshire Hobhouse took for Byron 13, Piccadilly Terrace (see *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 189, *note* 2). Her agent had distrained for the rent, £700 (*ibid.*, p. 283). Hobhouse, writing to Hanson, apparently in the summer of 1816, says, "The "sum which Lord B. has taken abroad with him arises from 2 *pro-*"*missory notes*, one for £1000, and another for £1500. The money "which he had in his bankers' hands on the 16th of April was about "£2050, and since that time he has drawn for sums which make his "balance £1650, according to Hoare's book sent to me. It is "really a thousand pities that the Duchess of Devonshire should not "be paid; but if his lordship's orders are precise, there is no help "for it." The Duchess of Devonshire's correspondence forms part of Mr. Vere Foster's *Two Duchesses* (1898).

Digitized by Google

to take were probably what he deemed his duty, and, though I regret that they were necessary, I am still more sorry to find that they seem to have been inefficacious. Indeed, till very lately I was not aware that your Grace was so unlucky as to have me still amongst the number of your debtors. I shall write to the person who has the management of my affairs in England, and, although I have but little control over either at present, I will do the best I can to have the remaining balance liquidated.

I have the honour to be, with great respect, your Grace's

Most obed$^{t}$ very humble Serv$^{t}$.,

BYRON.

## 678.—To Charles Hanson.

Venice, November 14$^{th}$ 1817.

DEAR CHARLES, — I did not answer your two letters of August and Sept$^{r}$ 9$^{th}$ because they led me to expect a third, as the last of the two announced enquiries which might possibly induce a sale (or treaty for a sale) of Newstead; but since that period I have heard no further, and I infer from thence that no sale has taken place. Upon this subject I can only repeat, that nothing can or could be more detrimental to my comfort and my interests; that any price ought to have been taken, rather than permit the estate to remain unsold; and that the delay must be far more prejudicial to me, than any price which covered the settlement, as I should be prepared to resign a portion of the income, in the event of the sale of the property, to liquidate the debts remaining unpaid, in case the surplus money should be insufficient.

I hope that you will do what you can to induce a sale by private contract, as public auction seems unavailing.

Digitized by Google

Above all, do not hope for a high price: *that* has been the fatal error of the former auctions, and the cause of the property remaining unsold. Sell it by *lots* in any shape or form, but let it be *sold*.

With regard to Rochdale, Mr. Kinnaird (who is I hope by this time returned) is in possession of my opinion.

I hope that you and your father are well, as well as all your family.

Believe me, very truly and affect^y^ yours,

BYRON.

P.S.—Whatever surplus remains from the Michaelmas rents may be transmitted through Messrs. Morlands' bank to this place.

## 679.—To John Murray.

Venice, November 15, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Kinnaird has probably returned to England by this time, and will have conveyed to you any tidings you may wish to have of us and ours. I have come back to Venice for the winter. Mr. Hobhouse will probably set off in December, but what day or week I know not. He is my opposite neighbour at present.

I wrote yesterday in some perplexity, and no very good humour, to Mr. Kinnaird, to inform me about Newstead and the Hansons, of which and whom I hear nothing since his departure from this place, except in a few unintelligible words from an unintelligible woman.

I am as sorry to hear of Dr. Polidori's accident as one can be for a person for whom one has a dislike, and something of contempt. When he gets well tell me, and

Digitized by Google

how he gets on in the sick line. Poor fellow! how came he to fix there?

> I fear the Doctor's skill at Norwich
> Will hardly salt the Doctor's porridge.

Methought he was going to the Brazils to give the Portuguese physic (of which they are fond to desperation) with the Danish Consul and the patronage of Frederic North (the most illustrious humbug of his age and country), and the blessing of Lady Westmoreland, William Ward's mad woman.

Your new Canto has expanded to one hundred and sixty-seven stanzas. It will be long, you see; and as for the notes by Hobhouse, I suspect they will be of the heroic size. You must keep Mr. Hobhouse in good humour, for he is devilish touchy yet about your Review and all which it inherits, including the Editor, the Admiralty, and its bookseller. I used to think that *I* was a good deal of an author in *amour propre* and *noli me tangere;* but these prose fellows are worst, after all, about their little comforts.

Do you remember my mentioning, some months ago, the Marquis Moncada—a Spaniard of distinction and fourscore years, my summer neighbour at La Mira? Well, about six weeks ago, he fell in love with a Venetian girl of family, and no fortune or character; took her into his mansion; quarrelled with all his former friends for giving him advice (except me who gave him none), and installed her present concubine and future wife and mistress of himself and furniture. At the end of a month, in which she demeaned herself as ill as possible, he found out a correspondence between her and some former keeper, and after nearly strangling, turned her out of the house, to the great scandal of the keeping part of the

Digitized by Google

town, and with a prodigious *éclat*, which has occupied all the canals and coffee-houses in Venice. He said she wanted to poison him; and she says—God knows what; but between them they have made a great deal of noise. I know a little of both the parties: Moncada seemed a very sensible old man, a character which he has not quite kept up on this occasion; and the woman is rather showy than pretty. For the honour of religion, she was bred in a convent; and for the credit of Great Britain, taught by an Englishwoman.

Yours sincerely,

B.

## 680.—To John Murray.

Venice, December 3, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—A Venetian lady, learned and somewhat stricken in years, having, in her intervals of love and devotion, taken upon her to translate the Letters and write the Life of Lady Mary Wortley Montague,[1]—to which undertaking there are two obstacles, firstly, ignorance of English, and, secondly, a total dearth of information on the subject of her projected biography,—has applied to me for facts or falsities upon this promising project. Lady M. lived the last twenty or more years of her life in or near Venice, I believe; but here they know nothing, and remember nothing, for the story of to-day is succeeded by the scandal of to-morrow; and the wit, and

1. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689–1762), letter-writer, friend and enemy of Pope, and champion of inoculation for the small-pox, was at Constantinople with her husband from May, 1717, to June, 1718. In 1739 she left England once more, this time without her husband, staying chiefly at Venice, Florence, Avignon, Brescia (1746–58), and again at Venice, till the autumn of 1761, when she left Italy to return to England. She died in the following summer.

Digitized by Google

beauty, and gallantry, which might render your country-woman notorious in her own country, must have been *here* no great distinction—because the first is in no request, and the two latter are common to all women, or at least the last of them. If you can therefore tell me any thing, or get any thing told, of Lady W. M., I shall take it as a favour, and will transfer and translate it to the *Dama* in question. And I pray you besides to send me, by some quick and safe voyager, the edition of her Letters, and the stupid Life, by Dr. Dalaway,[1] published by her proud and foolish family.

The death of the Princess Charlotte[2] has been a shock even here, and must have been an earthquake at home. The *Courier's* list of some three hundred heirs to the crown (including the house of Wirtemberg, with that blackguard, Paul,[3] of disreputable memory, whom I

1. James Dallaway (1763–1834) was chaplain and physician to the British embassy at Constantinople. His *Letters and other Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, from her Original MSS., with Memoirs of her Life* (5 vols.), was published in 1803.

2. Princess Charlotte, only child of the Prince Regent, recently married to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, afterwards King of the Belgians, died November 6, 1817.

"Scion of Chiefs and Monarchs, where art thou?
Fond Hope of many nations, art thou dead?
Could not the Grave forget thee, and lay low
Some less majestic, less beloved head?
In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hushed that pang for ever: with thee fled
The present happiness and promised joy
Which filled the Imperial Isles so full it seem'd to cloy."
*Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza clxviii.

3. Prince Paul of Wurtemberg, younger son of Frederick, Duke, and afterwards (1806–16) King, of Wurtemberg, became, by his father's second marriage, stepson to the Princess Royal of England. He came to England with the allied sovereigns in 1814. Mrs. Shirley, writing to her sister, Mary Frampton, June 11, 1814, of the guests at Lady Anson's ball (*Journal of Mary Frampton*, p. 212), says, "The odious Prince of Wurtemberg was there—a fright in all "ways." Again (*ibid.*, p. 220), James Frampton writes, "Prince "Paul of Wurtemberg is a sad blackguard."

Digitized by Google

remember seeing at various balls during the visit of the Muscovites, etc. in 1814) must be very consolatory to all true lieges, as well as foreigners, except Signor Travis, a rich Jew merchant of this city, who complains grievously of the length of British mourning, who has countermanded all the silks which he was on the point of transmitting, for a year to come. The death of this poor Girl is melancholy in every respect, dying at twenty or so, in childbed—of a *boy* too, a present princess and future queen, and just as she began to be happy, and to enjoy herself, and the hopes which she inspired. To be sure Providence is a fine fellow, and does wonders; "the "gods take care of Cato." [1]

I think, as far as I can recollect, she is the first royal defunct in childbed upon record in *our* history. I feel sorry in every respect—for the loss of a female reign, and a woman hitherto harmless; and all the lost rejoicings, and addresses, and drunkenness, and disbursements, of John Bull on the occasion. * * *

The Prince will marry again, after divorcing his wife, and Mr. Southey will write an elegy now, and an ode then; the *Quarterly* will have an article against the Press, and the *Edinburgh* an article *half* and *half*, about reform and right of divorce; the *British* will give you Dr. Chalmers' funeral sermon much commended, with a place in the Stars for deceased Royalty; and the *Morning Post* will have already yelled forth its "syllables "of dolour."

Woe, woe, Nealliny!—the young Nealliny! [2]

It is some time since I have heard from you: are you in bad humour? I suppose so. I have been so

1. Addison's *Cato*, act ii. sc. 1.
2. Southey's *Curse of Kehama*, i. 11.

Digitized by Google

myself; it is your turn now, and by and by mine will come round again.

Yours truly,
BYRON.

P.S.—Countess Albrizzi, come back from Paris, has brought me a medal of himself, a present from Denon [1] to me, and a likeness, to the *death*, of Mr. Rogers (belonging to her), by Denon also. I never saw so good a portrait; "and the trumpet shall sound and the dead "shall be raised."

## 681.—To John Hanson.

Venice, Dec^r 11^th 1817.

DEAR SIR,—The Sale of Newstead has been equally unexpected and agreeable to me and the Price much better than could be expected, considering the times. With regard to the Purchaser, Major Wildman,[2] I am

1. Dominique Vivant, Baron de Denon (1747–1825), arranged Mme. de Pompadour's collection of medals and gems, and was rewarded by being made, by Louis XV., *attaché* to the French Embassy at St. Petersburg. In 1775 he visited Voltaire at Ferney, and painted a well-known portrait of him. He spent a considerable time at Venice and Naples during the Revolutionary period. Through Josephine de Beauharnais he gained the patronage of Napoleon, visited Egypt with General Desaix, accompanied Napoleon in his expeditions to Austria, Spain, and Poland, and painted his battle-fields. Michael Kelly (*Reminiscences*, vol. ii. p. 325), who visited him in Paris at his house on the Quai Voltaire, speaks of his magnificent collection of "pictures, prints, cameos, intaglios, statues," etc. His portrait appears in the Countess Albrizzi's *Ritratti*. His *Monuments des Arts du dessin chez les peuples tant anciens que modernes recueillis par Vivant Denon*, in four folio volumes, was published, after his death, in 1829.

2. Colonel Thomas Wildman (1787–1859), eldest son of Thomas Wildman, of Bacton Hall, Suffolk, entered the 7th Hussars in 1807. He served in the Peninsular War, 1808–9 and 1813–14, and was aide-de-camp to Lord Uxbridge at Waterloo. (See also *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 286.) Wildman's name occurs in the following entry

Digitized by Google

unacquainted with his Means or his Property; but I recollect him as my old schoolfellow and a man of honour and would rather, as far as my personal feelings are concerned, that he should be the purchaser than another. I need hardly say that I shall gladly concur in every proper measure to bring the treaty to a satisfactory Conclusion, and that I am obliged by your exertions and rejoiced by their probable success.

The first Step in the event of a satisfactory conclusion will be the liquidation of my Debts. The list of annuities sent by Mr. Kinnaird, including Jews and Sawbridge, amounts to twelve thousand eight hundred and some odd pounds. Of these I think you will find the sum, stated by Hicks, Spring, and Thorpe as a thousand Pounds, to amount (by the Papers) to only seven hundred principal. You will also remember that I paid off one small annuity shortly before I left England, and I presume you have the papers and Acquittance, as I recollect consulting you on the subject at the time and giving you the parchment.

The *Massingberd annuities*, principal stated at £3300, may *wait* as they are Minority Debts, and must only have interest at £5 per Cent.; at any rate they *shall wait* for the present, till a *fair* arrangement can be made, as the treatment I have received from Israelites has not been such as to make me very indulgent towards them, tho' I will be equitable. The remainder—Thomas & Co.

on the first leaf of Byron's *Scriptores Græci*: "George Gordon "Byron, Wednesday, June 26th, A.D. 1805, 3 quarters of an hour "past 3 o'clock in the afternoon, 3d School, Calvert, monitor, Tom "Wildman on my left hand, and Long on my right. Harrow on "the Hill." Five years later was added the comment: "B. "January 9th, 1809.—Of the four persons whose names are here "mentioned, one is dead, another in a distant climate, *all* sepa- "rated, and not five years have elapsed since they sat together in "school, and none are yet twenty-one years of age."

Digitized by Google

should be paid off by the first opportunity, also Sawbridge, and Claughton's bond (now held by your Son) which with Baxter's (Coachmaker's) bond is, I think, all, except Mrs. Byron of Nottingham, *not* Simple-Contract Debts, and for these also Arrangements should be made, and the amounts called in. I know of few or none of any Amount, except my Taylor and Bookseller and house-rent to the Duchess of Devonshire. I should also be very glad to have your account, and, in short, I wish to apply my means, as far as in me lies, to the discharge of all fair and examined claims upon me, and I request you and Mr. Kinnaird to take the proper Steps therefore, according to circumstances arising out of the sale, supposing it to proceed without difficulties. I presume you have between you full Power to act for me. I am quite contented and pleased with the terms of the Sale, if acted upon and complied with.

With regard to *Rochdale*, do your best for me; but you know that speedy arrangements would suit me best after such long delays. Pray examine *closely* into all amounts, annuities, etc., that they may not take advantage of my absence. I do not wish to return to England at present, if it can be helped, and should think that a Clerk dispatched with the necessary papers might arrive here with less expence and trouble than would be produced either by your journey or mine. The English Consul or other competent witnesses might be in readiness. I write in haste and will take up my pen again shortly. In the mean time, with my best regards to Charles, all your family and self,

I am, ever yours truly and affectly.,

BYRON.

P.S.—Before I left England I entrusted to Mr.

Digitized by Google

Hobhouse's care several boxes of papers, some full of receipts which may be referred to or consulted in settling my affairs. Mr. Hobhouse is now here, but intends to be in England in a couple of months.

## 682.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Venice, December 15, 1817.

I should have thanked you before, for your favour a few days ago, had I not been in the intention of paying my respects, personally, this evening, from which I am deterred by the recollection that you will probably be at the Count Goess's [1] this evening, which has made me postpone my intrusion.

I think your Elegy a remarkably good one, not only as a composition, but both the politics and poetry contain a far greater proportion of truth and generosity than belongs to the times, or to the professors of these opposite pursuits, which usually agree only in one point, as extremes meet. I do not know whether you wished me to retain the copy, but I shall retain it till you tell me otherwise; and am very much obliged by the perusal.

My own sentiments on Venice, etc., such as they are, I had already thrown into verse last summer, in the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*, now in preparation for the press; and I think much more highly of them, for being in coincidence with yours.

Believe me yours, etc.

1. Count Goetz, the Austrian Governor of Venice.

Digitized by Google

# CHAPTER XVII.

## THE MOCENIGO PALACE, VENICE, JANUARY, 1818—JANUARY, 1819.

THE FORNARINA—"ODE ON VENICE"—*MAZEPPA*—*DON JUAN*, CANTO I.

### 683.—To John Murray.

Venice, January 8, 1818.

1.

My dear Mr. Murray,
You're in a damned hurry
To set up this ultimate Canto;
But (if they don't rob us)
You'll see Mr. Hobhouse
Will bring it safe in his portmanteau.

2.

For the Journal[1] you hint of,
As ready to print off,
No doubt you do right to commend it;

1. The first number of the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* was printed for William Blackwood in April, 1817. Murray purchased a half-share in the *Magazine* in August, 1818, and remained its joint proprietor till December, 1819, when it became the exclusive property of William Blackwood.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER XVII.

THE [illegible] PALACE, VENICE, JANUARY [illegible]8—JANUARY, 1819.

THE FRANARINA—"ODE ON VENICE"—*MAZEPPA*—*DON JUAN*, CANTO I.

### 683.—To John Murray.

Venice, January 8, 1818.

1.

[illegible] Murray,
[illegible] hurried hurry
[illegible] this ultimate Canto;
[illegible] they [illegible] us)
[illegible] Mr. Hobhouse
Will be [illegible] in his portmanteau.

2.

For the Journal you hint of,
As ready to print or,
Need not you go right to commend it;

[illegible] first number of the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* was [illegible] from Blackwood in April, 1817. Murray published in the *Magazine* in August, 1818, and remained its [illegible] December, 1819, when it became the exclusive [illegible] Blackwood.

Digitized by Google

Mocenigo Palace, Venice.
*from a drawing by Lady Eastlake.*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

But as yet I have writ off,
The devil a bit of
Our *Beppo;* when copied, I'll send it.

3.

In the mean time you've "Galley"
Whose verses all tally,
Perhaps you may say he's a Ninny,
But if you abashed are
Because of *Alashtar*,
He'll drivel another *Phrosine.*

4.

Then you've Sotheby's tour,[1]
No great things, to be sure,—
You could hardly begin with a less work;
For the pompous rascallion,
Who don't speak Italian
Nor French, must have scribbled by guess-work.

5.

No doubt he's a rare man
Without knowing German
Translating his way up Parnassus,
And now still absurder
He meditates Murder
As you'll see in the trash he calls *Tasso's.*

1. Sotheby's *Farewell to Italy, and Occasional Poems* was published 1818, as the result of a tour which he had, in 1816–17, made with his family, Prof. Elmsley, and Dr. Playfair. Byron began to write a skit upon Sotheby's Tour, but never completed it. The fragment is printed in Appendix V.

Digitized by Google

6.

But you've others his betters
The real men of letters
Your Orators—Critics—and Wits,—
And I'll bet that your Journal
(Pray is it diurnal?)
Will pay with your luckiest hits.

7.

You can make any loss up
With "Spence"[1] and his Gossip,
A work which must surely succeed;
Then Queen Mary's Epistle-craft,[2]
With the new "Fytte" of "Whistlecraft,"
Must make people purchase and read.

8.

Then you've General Gordon,[3]
Who girded his sword on,
To serve with a Muscovite Master,
And help him to polish
A nation so owlish,
They thought shaving their beards a disaster.

1. *Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men*, by the Rev. Joseph Spence, arranged with notes by the late Edmund Malone, Esq., 1 vol. 8vo, 1820.

2. *The Life of Mary Queen of Scots*, by George Chalmers, 2 vols. 4to, 1819.

3. Thomas Gordon (1788–1841), educated at Eton and Brasenose, entered the Scots Greys in 1808. Two years later he visited Ali Pasha (see *Letters*, vol. i. p. 246, *note* 1) in Albania, and travelled in Persia and Turkey in the East. From 1813 to 1815 he served in the Russian Army. In 1816 he married an Armenian Greek at Constantinople. He served with Ipsilanti in the Greek War of Independence. It does not appear that he was negotiating with Murray for the publication of any work.

Digitized by Google

9.

For the man, "*poor and shrewd*," *
With whom you'd conclude
A compact without more delay,
Perhaps some such pen is
Still extant in Venice;
But please, sir, to mention *your pay*.

10.

Now tell me some news
Of your friends and the Muse
Of the Bar, or the Gown, or the House,
From Canning, the tall wit,
To Wilmot the small wit,
Ward's creeping Companion and *Louse*,

11.

Who's so damnably bit
With fashion and Wit,
That he crawls on the surface like Vermin,
But an Insect in both,—
By his Intellect's growth
Of what size you may quickly determine.[1]

* "Vide your letter."

## 684.—To John Murray.

Venice, January 19, 1818.

MY DEAR SIR,—I send you the story[2] (in three other separate covers). It won't do for your Journal, being full of political allusions. *Print alone, without name;*

1. Stanzas 12, 13, 14 cannot be published.
2. *Beppo.*



Digitized by Google

alter nothing; get a scholar to see that the *Italian phrases* are correctly published, (your printing, by the way, always makes me ill with its eternal blunders, which are incessant), and God speed you. Hobhouse left Venice a fortnight ago, saving two days. I have heard nothing of or from him.

Yours truly,

B.

He has the whole of the MSS.; so put up prayers in your back shop, or in the printer's "Chapel." [1]

## 685.—To John Murray.

Venice, January 27, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—My father—that is, not God the Father, but my father in God, my Armenian father, Padre Pasquali—in the name of all the other fathers of our convent, sends you the inclosed greeting.

Inasmuch as it has pleased the translators of the long-lost and lately-found portions of the text of Eusebius [2] to put forth the inclosed prospectus, of which I send six

1. A "chapel" is a meeting of the workmen for the purpose of making and enforcing bye-laws for the maintenance of good fellowship, and for settling any disputes that may have arisen among themselves. The person whose duty it is to call such meeting, and who usually presides, is styled "The Father of the Chapel."—(Moore.)

2. The following extract is taken from the *Compendiose Notizie sulla Congregazione de' Monaci Armeni Mechitaristi di Venezia nell' isola di S. Lazzaro* (Tipografia di Suddetta Isola, 1819, p. 122): "I Successori di Mechitar aumentarono la sua Congregazione, e la "fecero fiorire maggiormente nelle scienze, e nelle lingue: ne fa "fede la copia dei libri, che sono alla luce. Oltre le Grammatiche "ed i Dizionarj di diverse lingue stamparono l'anno scorso la "Cronaca d'Eusebio di Cesarea in tre lingue Armena, Latina, e "Greca; opera, di cui erasi perduto il Greco Originale: ne rin- "vennero essi la versione intiera in Armeno fatta anticamente, e la "recarono in Latino, cui aggiunsero pubblicandola i frammenti "Greci a sommo vantaggio dei Letterati d'Europa."

Digitized by Google

copies, you are hereby implored to obtain Subscribers in the two Universities, and among the learned, and the unlearned who would unlearn their ignorance.—This *they* (the Convent) request, *I* request, and *do you* request.

I sent you *Beppo* some weeks agone. You had best publish it alone; it has politics and ferocity, and won't do for your Isthmus of a Journal.

Mr. Hobhouse, if the Alps have not broken his neck, is, or ought to be, swimming with my Commentaries and his own coat of Mail in his teeth and right hand, in a cork jacket, between Calais and Dover.

It is the height of the Carnival, and I am in the *estrum* and agonies of a new intrigue with I don't exactly know whom or what, except that she is insatiate of love, and won't take money, and has light hair and blue eyes, which are not common here, and that I met her at the Masque, and that when her mask is off, I am as wise as ever. I shall make what I can of the remainder of my youth, * * * *

B.

## 686.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, February 2, 1818.

Your letter of December 8th arrived but this day, by some delay, common but inexplicable. Your domestic calamity[1] is very grievous, and I feel with you as much as I *dare* feel at all. Throughout life, your loss must be my loss, and your gain my gain; and, though my heart

1. The death of Moore's daughter Barbara. Writing to his mother, September 20, 1817, Moore says, "It's all over, my dearest "mother; our Barbara is gone. She died the day before yester-"day; and though her death was easy, it was a dreadful scene to us "both. I can bear such things myself pretty well; but to see and "listen to poor Bessy makes me as bad as she is" (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. ii. p. 125).

Digitized by Google

may ebb, there will always be a drop for you among the dregs.

I know how to feel with you, because (selfishness being always the substratum of our damnable clay) I am quite wrapt up in my own children. Besides my little legitimate, I have made unto myself an *il*-legitimate since (to say nothing of one before), and I look forward to one of these as the pillar of my old age, supposing that I ever reach—which I hope I never shall—that desolating period. I have a great love for my little Ada, though perhaps she may torture me like * * * * *

Your offered address will be as acceptable as you can wish. I don't much care what the wretches of the world think of me—all *that*'s past. But I care a good deal what *you* think of me, and, so say what you like. You *know* that I am not sullen; and, as to being *savage*, such things depend on circumstances. However, as to being in good humour in *your* society, there is no great merit in that, because it would be an effort, or an insanity, to be otherwise.

I don't know what Murray may have been saying or quoting.[1] I called Crabbe and Sam the fathers of present Poesy; and said, that I thought—except them—*all* of "*us youth*" were on a wrong tack. But I never

1. "Having seen by accident the passage in one of his letters to "Mr. Murray, in which he denounces, as false and worthless, the "poetical system on which the greater number of his cotemporaries, "as well as himself, founded their reputation, I took an opportunity, "in the next letter I wrote to him, of jesting a little on this opinion, "and his motives for it. It was, no doubt (I ventured to say), excel- "lent policy in him, who had made sure of his own immortality in this "style of writing, thus to throw overboard all us poor devils who were "embarked with him. He was, in fact, I added, behaving towards us "much in the manner of the Methodist preacher who said to his con- "gregation, 'You may think, at the Last Day, to get to heaven by "laying hold on my skirts; but I'll cheat you all, for I'll wear a "spencer, I'll wear a spencer!'" (Moore).

Digitized by Google

said that we did not sail well. Our fame will be hurt by *admiration* and *imitation*. When I say *our*, I mean *all* (Lakers included), except the postscript of the Augustans. The next generation (from the quantity and facility of imitation) will tumble and break their necks off our Pegasus, who runs away with us; but we keep the *saddle*, because we broke the rascal and can ride. But though easy to mount, he is the devil to guide; and the next fellows must go back to the riding-school and the manège, and learn to ride the "great horse."

Talking of horses, by the way, I have transported my own, four in number, to the Lido[1] (*beach* in English), a

1. Of Byron's daily rides on the Lido, Hoppner gives the following account (Moore's *Life*, p. 373):—

"Almost immediately after Mr. Hobhouse's departure, Lord "Byron proposed to me to accompany him in his rides on the Lido. "One of the long narrow islands which separate the Lagune, in the "midst of which Venice stands, from the Adriatic, is more particu- "larly distinguished by this name. At one extremity is a fortifica- "tion, which, with the Castle of St. Andrea on an island on the "opposite side, defends the nearest entrance to the city from the "sea. In times of peace this fortification is almost dismantled, and "Lord Byron had hired here of the Commandant an unoccupied "stable, where he kept his horses. The distance from the city was "not very considerable; it was much less than to the Terra Firma, "and, as far as it went, the spot was not ineligible for riding.

"Every day that the weather would permit, Lord Byron called "for me in his gondola, and we found the horses waiting for us out- "side of the fort. We rode as far as we could along the seashore, "and then on a kind of dyke, or embankment, which has been "raised where the island was very narrow, as far as another small "fort about half-way between the principal one which I have "already mentioned, and the town or village of Malamocco, which "is near the other extremity of the island, the distance between the "two forts being about three miles.

"On the land side of the embankment, not far from the smaller "fort, was a boundary stone, which probably marked some division "of property,—all the side of the island nearest the Lagune being "divided into gardens for the cultivation of vegetables for the Vene- "tian markets. At the foot of this stone Lord Byron repeatedly "told me that I should cause him to be interred, if he should die in "Venice, or its neighbourhood, during my residence there; and he "appeared to think, as he was not a Catholic, that, on the part of "the Government, there could be no obstacle to his interment in an

Digitized by Google

strip of some ten miles along the Adriatic, a mile or two from the city; so that I not only get a row in my gondola, but a spanking gallop of some miles daily along a firm and solitary beach, from the fortress to Malamocco, the which contributes considerably to my health and spirits.

I have hardly had a wink of sleep this week past. We are in the agonies of the Carnival's last days, and I must be up all night again, as well as to-morrow. I have had some curious masking adventures this Carnival; but, as they are not yet over, I shall not say on. I will work the mine of my youth to the last veins of the ore, and then—good night. I have lived, and am content.

Hobhouse went away before the Carnival began, so that he had little or no fun. Besides, it requires some time to be thoroughgoing with the Venetians; but of all this anon, in some other letter. * * * * *

I must dress for the evening. There is an opera and ridotto, and I know not what, besides balls; and so, ever and ever yours,

B.

"unhallowed spot of ground by the seaside. At all events, I was "to overcome whatever difficulties might be raised on this account. "I was by no means, he repeatedly told me, to allow his body to "be removed to England, nor permit any of his family to interfere "with his funeral.

"Nothing could be more delightful than these rides on the Lido "were to me. We were from half to three quarters of an hour "crossing the water, during which his conversation was always "most amusing and interesting. Sometimes he would bring with "him any new book he had received, and read to me the passages "which most struck him. Often he would repeat to me whole "stanzas of the poems he was engaged in writing, as he had com-"posed them on the preceding evening; and this was the more "interesting to me, because I could frequently trace in them some "idea which he had started in our conversation of the preceding "day, or some remark, the effect of which he had been evidently "trying upon me. Occasionally, too, he spoke of his own affairs, "making me repeat all I had heard with regard to him, and desiring "that I would not spare him, but let him know the worst that was "said."

Digitized by Google

P.S.—I send this without revision, so excuse errors. I delight in the fame and fortune of *Lalla*, and again congratulate you on your well-merited success.

## 687.—To John Murray.

Venice, Feb. 20, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—I have to thank Mr. Croker for the arrival, and you for the Continents, of the parcel which came last week, much quicker than any before, owing to Mr. C.'s kind attention, and the official exterior of the bags; and all safe, except much fraction amongst the magnesia, of which only two bottles came entire; but it is all very well, and I am exceedingly obliged to you.

The books I have read, or rather am reading. Pray, who may be the Sexagenarian,[1] whose gossip is very amusing? Many of his sketches I recognise, particularly Gifford, Mackintosh, Drummond, Dutens, H. Walpole, Mrs. Inchbald, Opie, etc., with the Scotts, Loughborough, and most of the divines and lawyers, besides a few shorter hints of authors, and a few lines about a certain "*Noble Author*," characterised as Malignant and Sceptical,[2] according to the good old story, "as it was in the

1. *The Sexagenarian, or Recollections of a Literary Life*, though posthumously published, was printed under the inspection of its author, the Rev. William Beloe (1756–1817), translator of Herodotus, Keeper of the printed books at the British Museum (1803–6), one of the proprietors and editor of the *British Critic*, and author of *Anecdotes of Literature and Scarce Books* (1806–12), etc., etc. Beloe devotes chapters xxxiv.–xxxix. to Porson, incidentally (ch. xxxvii.) defending him from the attacks of Gilbert Wakefield, in his *Correspondence* with Charles James Fox (pp. 99–101). He also concludes his volumes with a chapter of "Porsoniana." (For Porson, see *Letters*, vol. i. p. 84, *note* 2.)

2. "Neither would I have you ask the *Noble Author*. Him, I "mean, who is certainly possessed of great intellectual powers, and "a peculiar turn for a certain line of poetry; but whose bad passions "so perpetually insinuate themselves in every thing which he writes, "that it is hardly possible to escape the injury of his venom, and

Digitized by Google

"beginning, is now, but *not* always shall be:" do you know such a person, Master Murray? eh?—And pray, of the Booksellers,[1] which be *you*? the dry, the dirty, the honest, the opulent, the finical, the splendid, or the Coxcomb Bookseller? "Stap my vitals," but the author grows scurrilous in his grand Climacteric!

I remember to have seen Porson at Cambridge, in the Hall of our College, and in private parties, but not frequently: and I never can recollect him except as drunk or brutal, and generally both: I mean in an evening, for in the hall he dined at the Dean's table, and I at the Vice-master's, so that I was not near him; and he then and there appeared sober in his demeanour, nor did I ever hear of excess or outrage on his part in public,—Commons, college, or Chapel; but I have seen him in a private party of undergraduates, many of them freshmen and strangers—take up a poker to one of them, and heard him use language as blackguard as his action. I have seen Sheridan drunk, too, with all the world; but his intoxication was that of Bacchus, and Porson's that of Silenus. Of all the disgusting brutes, sulky, abusive, and intolerable, Porson was the most bestial, as far as the few times that I saw him went, which were only at William Bankes's[2] (the Nubian Discoverer's) rooms. I

"scarcely worth while to separate the gold from the dross. His "volatile mind thinks it an act of manliness to sneer at religion, and "if on any occasion provoked to resentment, his malignity becomes "fury, and there is no object either too high or too low upon which "he does not vent his rancour" (*Sexagenarian*, vol. ii. p. 230).

1. Beloe describes the Booksellers in chapters xl.–xliv. The "dry" Bookseller (*Sexagenarian*, vol. ii. p. 255) is said to be Joseph Johnson; the "dirty" (*ibid.*, pp. 252, 253), Thomas Miller, of Bungay, in Suffolk; "the honest" (*ibid.*, p. 261), Thomas Payne; the "opulent" (*ibid.*, p. 258), Thomas Cadell; the "finical" (*ibid.*, p. 256), George Leigh; the "splendid" (*ibid.*, p. 253), William Miller, of 50, Albemarle Street, from whom the "coxcomb" Bookseller, John Murray (*ibid.*, p. 253), purchased his business.

2. See *Letters*, vol. i. p. 120, *note* 1.

Digitized by Google

saw him once go away in a rage, because nobody knew the name of the "Cobbler of Messina,"[1] insulting their ignorance with the most vulgar terms of reprobation. He was tolerated in this state amongst the young men for his talents—as the Turks think a Madman inspired, and bear with him. He used to recite, or rather vomit, pages of all languages, and could hiccup Greek like a Helot; and certainly Sparta never shocked her children with a grosser exhibition than this man's intoxication.

I perceive, in the book you sent me, a long account of him; of Gilbert Wakefield's account of him, which is very savage, I cannot judge, as I never saw him sober, except in *Hall* or Combination-room; and then I was never near enough to hear, and hardly to see him. Of his drunken deportment I can be sure, because I saw it.

With the Reviews I have been much entertained. It requires to be as far from England as I am to relish a periodical paper properly: it is like Soda-water in an Italian Summer. But what cruel work you make with

1. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1743 (vol. xiii. p. 650) is an account of the "Cobbler of Messina," an honest patriot, who, disgusted by the laxity of the times, took the law into his own hands. Sallying forth at night, with his gun, powder-pouch, and bullets, he shot notorious criminals, unjust judges, and dissolute nobles. At last he disclosed his name to the Viceroy, received a reward of 2000 crowns and pardon for his crimes, and was shipped off with his wife and family in a *tartane* to Genoa.

But it seems more probable that Byron refers to Vatinius of Beneventum, originally a shoemaker's apprentice, afterwards a buffoon, who acquired wealth and power at the court of Nero by accusing the most distinguished men in the state. His name was given to drinking-cups having *nasi* or nozzles. Compare—

> "Tu Beneventani sutoris nomen habentem
> Siccabis calicem nasorum quatuor," etc.
> Juvenal, *Sat.* v. lines 46, 47.

See also Martial, *Epigramm.* (xiv. 96)—

> "Vilia sutoris calicem monumenta Vatini
> Accipe; sed nasus longior ille fuit."

Digitized by Google

Lady Morgan![1]—You should recollect that she is a woman; though, to be sure, they are now and then very provoking: still, as authoresses, they can do no great harm; and I think it a pity so much good invective should have been laid out upon her, when there is such a fine field of us Jacobin gentlemen for you to work upon. It is perhaps as bitter a Critique as ever was written, and enough to make sad work for Dr. Morgan, both as a husband and an Apothecary, unless she should say as Pope did, of some attack upon him, "that it is as "good for *her* as a dose of *Hartshorn*."[2]

I heard from Moore lately, and was very sorry to be made aware of his domestic loss. Thus it is—*medio de fonte leporum*[3]—in the acmé of his fame and of his happiness comes a drawback as usual.

His letter, somehow or other, was more than two months on the road, so that I could only answer it the other day. What you tell me of Rogers in your last letter is like him; but he had best let *us*, that is one of us, if not both, alone.[4] He cannot say that I have not

1. For a review of Lady Morgan's *France*, see *Quarterly Review*, vol. xvii. p. 260. See also *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 111, *note*.

2. Pope, writing to Warburton of Cibber's second letter, January 12, 1743-4 (Pope's *Works*, ed. Courthope, vol. ix. p. 239), says, "I am told the Laureat is going to publish a very abusive pam-"phlet. That is all I can desire; it is enough if it be abusive, and if "it be his. . . . He will be more to me than a dose of hartshorn; "and as a stink revives one who has been oppressed with perfumes, "his railing will cure me of a course of flatteries."

3. Lucretius, *De Rerum Naturâ*, iv. 1133.

4. Rogers hesitated whether, in his *Human Life* (1819), he should altogether omit a reference to Byron, or add some words of condemnation. Byron was told of this hesitation by Moore or Murray, and he may be alluding to it here. Eventually Rogers retained the reference, but only gave the initial of Byron's name. Speaking of those who, like Surrey, the Black Prince, or Milton, "on Youth "a grace, a lustre shed," he mentions—

"Young B—— in the groves of Academe,
Or where Ilyssus winds his whispering stream."

(See Clayden's *Rogers and his Contemporaries*, vol. i. pp. 287, 288.)

Digitized by Google

been a sincere and a warm friend to him, till the black drop of his liver oozed through, too palpably to be overlooked. Now, if I once catch him at any of his jugglery with me or mine, let him look to it, for, if I spare him then, write me down a good-natured gentleman; and the more that I have been deceived,—the more that I once relied upon him,—I don't mean his petty friendship (what is that to me?), but his *good* will, which I really tried to obtain, thinking him at first a good fellow,—the more will I pay off the balance; and so, if he values his quiet, let him look to it; in three months I could restore him to the Catacombs.

Mr. Hoppner, whom I saw this morning, has been made the father of a very fine boy.[1]—Mother and child doing very well indeed. By this time Hobhouse should be with you, and also certain packets, letters, etc., of mine, sent since his departure.—I am not at all well in health within this last eight days. My remembrances to Gifford and all friends.

Yours,

B.

P.S.—In the course of a month or two, Hanson will have probably to send off a clerk with conveyances to

1. "On the birth of this child, who was christened John William "Rizzo, Lord Byron wrote the four following lines, which are in no "other respect remarkable than that they were thought worthy of "being metrically translated into no less than ten different lan-"guages: namely, Greek, Latin, Italian (also in the Venetian "dialect), German, French, Spanish, Illyrian, Hebrew, Armenian, "and Samaritan:—

"'His father's sense, his mother's grace
In him, I hope, will always fit so;
With (still to keep him in good case)
The health and appetite of Rizzo.'

"The original lines, with the different versions just mentioned, "were printed, in a small neat volume (which now lies before me), "in the seminary of Padua" (Moore).

Digitized by Google

sign (Newstead being sold in November last for ninety-four thousand and five hundred pounds), in which case I supplicate supplies of articles as usual, for which desire Mr. Kinnaird to settle from funds in their bank, and deduct from my account with him.

P.S.—To-morrow night I am going to see *Otello*,[1] an opera from our *Othello*, and one of Rossini's best, it is said. It will be curious to see in Venice the Venetian story itself represented, besides to discover what they will make of Shakespeare in Music.

## 688.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Venice, February 28, 1818.

MY DEAR SIR,—Our friend, il Conte M., threw me into a cold sweat last night, by telling me of a menaced version of *Manfred* (Venetian, I hope, to complete the thing) by some Italian, who had sent it to you for correction, which is the reason why I take the liberty of troubling you on the subject. If you have any means of communication with the man, would you permit me to convey to him the offer of any price he may obtain or think to obtain for his project, provided he will throw his translation into the fire,[2] and promise not to undertake

1. *Otello* was first produced at Naples, in 1816.

2. Having ascertained that the utmost this translator could expect to make by his manuscript was two hundred francs, Lord Byron offered him that sum, if he would desist from publishing. The Italian, however, held out for more; nor could he be brought to terms, till it was intimated to him pretty plainly from Lord Byron that, should the publication be persisted in, he would horsewhip him the very first time they met. Being but little inclined to suffer martyrdom in the cause, the translator accepted the two hundred francs, and delivered up his manuscript, entering at the same time into a written engagement never to translate any other of the noble poet's works.

Of the qualifications of this person as a translator of English

Digitized by Google

any other of that or any other of *my* things: I will send his money immediately on this condition.

As I did not write *to* the Italians, nor *for* the Italians, nor *of* the Italians, (except in a poem not yet published, where I have said all the good I know or do not know of them, and none of the harm,) I confess I wish that they would let me alone, and not drag me into their arena as one of the gladiators, in a silly contest which I neither understand nor have ever interfered with, having kept clear of all their literary parties, both here and at Milan, and elsewhere.—I came into Italy to feel the climate and be quiet, if possible. Mossi's translation [1] I would have prevented, if I had known it, or could have done so; and I trust that I shall yet be in time to stop this new gentleman, of whom I heard yesterday for the first time. He will only hurt himself, and do no good to his party, for in *party* the whole thing originates. Our modes of thinking and writing are so unutterably different, that I can conceive no greater absurdity than attempting to make any approach between the English and Italian poetry of the present day. I like the people very much, and their literature very much, but I am not the least ambitious of being the subject of their discussions literary and personal (which appear to be pretty much the same thing, as is the case in most countries); and if you can aid me in impeding this publication,

poetry, some idea may be formed from the difficulty he found himself under respecting the meaning of a line in the Incantation in *Manfred*—

"And the wisp on the morass,"

which he requested of Mr. Hoppner to expound to him, not having been able to find in the dictionaries to which he had access any other signification of the word "wisp" than "a bundle of straw" (Moore).

1. It has not been found possible to identify the translation to which Byron here alludes.

Digitized by Google

you will add to much kindness already received from you by

Yours ever and truly,

BYRON.

P.S.—How is *the* son, and mamma? Well, I dare say.

## 689.—To Samuel Rogers.

Venice, March 3d, 1818.

DEAR ROGERS,—I have not, as you say, "taken to "wife the Adriatic;"[1] but if the Adriatic will take my

1. The ceremony of wedding the Adriatic was instituted by Pope Alexander III., in 1174, who gave the Doge a gold ring off his own finger to commemorate the Venetian victory over Frederick Barbarossa at Istria, and desired the Doge to throw a similar ring into the sea every Ascension Day.

The following is the letter from Rogers, which Byron is answering:—

"London, 8 Feby. 1818.

"MY DEAR BYRON,—A thousand times in the dead of the Night "have I determined to write to you, but when Morning came with "its train of impertinencies, I put it off till to-morrow; and to-"morrow, you know, never comes. So you have at last taken the "Adriatic to wife. May you write and write about your Mistress "till we are tired of the subject. Not that we should be ever so.

"'There is a City in the Sea!
The Sea is in the narrow streets
Ebbing and flowing, etc.'

"But what have you been about? How often have you wandered "by moon-light on the water, and returned at the hour of *love*, your "boatman singing stanzas from *Tasso*? Do the winds that blow "from Greece bring you any affectionate remembrances? I hear "you have a villa and a garden full of fig and pomegranate trees, "no noise except the flutter of moths and the trickling of fountains. "Well, Signor, I envy you; and many months shall not pass away, "but I will make an effort at least to visit you in your Elysium. "Moore and I spent a month last summer in a City far less romantic "than yours—the idlest and the busiest yet discovered. He was "delighted with the ballet—there he saw glimpses of his own Lalla "Rookh, and every night when he closed his eyes, he dreamt of

Digitized by Google

wife, I shall be very glad to marry her instead. In the mean time, I have had wife enough; as the Grammar has it, *tædet vitæ, pertæsum est conjugii.* However, the last part of this exquisite quotation only is applicable to my case; I like life very well in my own way.

I heard of Moore's loss from himself in a letter which was delayed upon the road three months. I was sincerely sorry for it, but in such cases what are words? The villa you speak of is one at Este, which Mr. Hoppner (Consul-general here) has transferred to me. I have taken it for two years as a place of villeggiatura.

"Mosellay and Rocnabad, nymphs and butterflies. You have heard "of his loss. He is now, I hope, forgetting it in a cottage in "Wiltshire. I was in that country the other day, and paid a visit "to the Abbot of Fonthill. The woods recalled Vallombrosa, the "Abbey the Duomo at Milan, and, as for its interior, the length of "the galleries (only think of 330 feet), the splendour of the cabinets, "and the magical illusions of light and shade, realized all my "visions. Then he played and sung; and the effect was singular— "like the pealings of a distant choir, now swelling, now dying "away. He read me his travels in Portugal, and the stories related "in that small chamber in the Palace of Eblis. The last were full "of unimaginable horrors, but of those delectable personages, of "Zulkais and Kalilah—more when we meet. The Mercer (no "longer the mercenary) has miscarried of a young Flahaut. Of "*Rob Roy* the opinions are numberless; but I am sure it is Scott's, "as well as *Harold the Dauntless*, which nobody reads.

"Is Francis Junius? The lawyers say they should hang any "man on such evidence. Ellenborough maintains there is but one "thing against it—the impossibility.

"Lord Holland has just had a windfall from his uncle L^d^ Ossory, "but I fear it is not much.

"Apropos of business, I rejoice you have sold Newstead, but "pray don't go and lay out the money on the Brenta, whatever you "do. The bride of Abydos—Mrs. Mardyn! with camels and "elephants and a castle in flames. Your rhymes were as thickly "bestrewn in the dialogue as the diamonds in Kean's turban, and "secured it a good Reception.

"Adieu, my dear Byron. Pray, pray write. Be it yours to set "an example, and not to follow one.

"When shall we see Hobhouse and his fellow-traveller the Child? "Soon, I hope.

"Ever yours!

"SAML. ROGERS."

Digitized by Google

The situation is very beautiful, indeed, among the Euganean hills, and the house very fair. The vines are luxuriant to a great degree, and all the fruits of the earth abundant. It is close to the old castle of the Estes, or Guelphs, and within a few miles of Arqua, which I have visited twice, and hope to visit often.

Last summer (except an excursion to Rome) I passed upon the Brenta. In Venice I winter, transporting my horses to the Lido, bordering the Adriatic (where the fort is), so that I get a gallop of some miles daily along the strip of beach which reaches the Malamocco, when in health; but within these few weeks I have been unwell. At present I am getting better. The Carnival was short, but a good one. I don't go out much, except during the time of masques; but there are one or two *conversazioni*, where I go regularly, just to keep up the system, as I had letters to their givers, and they are particular on such points; and now and then, though very rarely, to the Governor's.

It is a very good place for women. * * * I like the dialect and their manner very much. There is a *naïveté* about them which is very winning, and the romance of the place is a mighty adjunct; the *bel sangue* is not, however, now amongst the *dame* or higher orders; but all under *i fazzioli*, or kerchiefs (a white kind of veil which the lower orders wear upon their heads);—the *vesta zendale*, or old national female costume, is no more. The city, however, is decaying daily, and does not gain in population. However, I prefer it to any other in Italy; and here have I pitched my staff, and here do I purpose to reside for the remainder of my life, unless events, connected with business not to be transacted out of England, compel me to return for that purpose; otherwise I have few regrets, and no desires to visit it again for its own

Digitized by Google

sake. I shall probably be obliged to do so, to sign papers for my affairs, and a proxy for the Whigs, and to see Mr. Waite, for I can't find a good dentist here, and every two or three years one ought to consult one. About seeing my children, I must take my chance. One I shall have sent here; and I shall be very happy to see the legitimate one, when God pleases, which he perhaps will some day or other. As for my mathematical Medea, I am as well without her.

Your account of your visit to F[onthill] is very striking: could you beg of *him* for *me* a copy in MS. of the remaining *Tales*?[1] I think I deserve them, as a strenuous and public admirer of the first one. I will return it when read, and make no ill use of the copy, if granted. Murray would send me out anything safely. If ever I return to England, I should like very much to see the author, with his permission. In the mean time, you could not oblige me more than by obtaining me the perusal I request, in French or English,—all's one for that, though I prefer Italian to either. I have a French copy of *Vathek* which I bought at Lausanne. I can read French with great pleasure and facility, though I neither speak nor write it. Now Italian I *can* speak with some fluency, and write sufficiently for my purposes, but I don't like their *modern* prose at all; it is very heavy, and so different from Machiavelli.

1. "Beckford read to me the two unprinted episodes to *Vathek*; "and they are extremely fine, but very objectionable, on account of "their subjects. Indeed, they show that the mind of the author "was, to a certain degree, diseased. The one is the story of a "prince and princess, a brother and sister. . . . The other is the "tale of a prince who is violently enamoured of a lady; and who, "after pursuing her through various countries, at last overtakes her, "only to find her a corpse. . . . In one of these tales is an exquisite "description of a voyage down the Nile."—*Recollections of the Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers*, p. 218.



Digitized by Google

They say Francis is Junius; I think it looks like it.[1] I remember meeting him at Earl Grey's at dinner. Has not he lately married a young woman? and was not he Madame Talleyrand's *Cavalier servente* in India years ago?

I read my death in the papers, which was not true. I see they are marrying the remaining singleness of the royal family.[2] They have brought out *Fasio*[3] with great and deserved success at Covent Garden: that's a good sign. I tried, during the directory, to have it done at Drury Lane, but was overruled; as also in an effort I made in favour of Sotheby's trash, which I did to oblige the mountebank, who has since played me a trick, or two

1. See Taylor's *Identity of Junius with a Distinguished Living Character established*, and a review of it in the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. xxix. p. 94. The Reviewer (Brougham) says, "That this work "proves Sir Philip Francis to be Junius, we will not affirm; but "this we can safely assert, that it accumulates such a mass of cir- "cumstantial evidence, as renders it extremely difficult to believe he "is not; and that, if so many coincidences shall be found to have "misled us in this case, our faith in all conclusions drawn from "proofs of a similar kind may henceforth be shaken. . . . All the evi- "dence which can be drawn from a comparison of Junius's Letters "and Sir Philip's Life and Writings points him out as the author: "there is no circumstance which does not tally with this conclusion, "and no difficulty which it does not explain." Sir Philip Francis (1740–1818) was sentenced, in March, 1779, to pay a fine of 50,000 rupees to the husband of Madame Grand, who left India under his protection, and subsequently became the mistress, and, in 1801, the wife, of Talleyrand. Sir Philip married, in 1814, Emma, daughter of the Rev. H. Watkins, Prebendary of York and Southwell.

2. The Duke of Clarence married, July 11, 1818, Princess Adelaide of Saxe Meiningen, and the Duke of Cambridge married, June 1, 1818, Princess Augusta of Hesse Cassel. Parliament was informed of the approaching marriages April 13, 1818.

3. Henry Hart Milman (1791–1868), afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, and author of the *History of the Jews* (1830), *Latin Christianity* (1855), and several volumes of verse, original and translated, published his *Fasio* in 1815. This drama, without the author's knowledge and consent, as *The Italian Wife*, was put on the stage at the Surrey Theatre. It was acted at Bath, January 6, 1818, and at Covent Garden, February 5, 1818. Genest (*English Stage*, vol. viii. p. 669) criticizes the play from an acting point of view.

Digitized by Google

(I suspect), which perhaps he may remember as well as his airs of patronage, which he affects with young writers, and affected both *to* me and *of* me many a long year. He sent me (unless the *handwriting* be a most extraordinary coincidental mistake) an anonymous note at Rome about the "Poeshie" of "Chillon etc." I can swear also to his phrases, particularly the word "effulgence." Well —I say nothing.

If you think of coming into this country, you will let me know perhaps beforehand. I suppose Moore won't move. Rose[1] is here, and has made a *relazione* with a

1. William Stewart Rose (1775–1843), through his father, George Rose, held a lucrative appointment in the House of Lords. In early life he felt the fascination of "romance" and "the legendary lay." He translated from the French the first three books of *Amadis de Gaule*, with notes (1803); and (1807) *Partenopex de Blois*. With the latter was published his ballad, "The Red King." Two other ballads, "The Crusade of St. Lewis" and "King Edward the "Martyr," are said to have appeared in 1810. To Rose, who was his friend, his host in the New Forest, and introduced him to the Morritts of Rokeby, Scott dedicates his Introduction to Canto I. of *Marmion*. Alluding to Rose's writings, Scott speaks of him as finding a theme in—

> "that Red King, who, while of old,
> Through Boldrewood the chase he led
> By his lov'd huntsman's arrow bled;"

or singing—

> ". . . how he of Gaul,
> That Amadis so famed in hall,
> For Oriana, foil'd in fight
> The Necromancer's felon might;
> And well in modern verse hast wove
> Partenopex's mystic love."

After the peace of 1814 Rose travelled in Italy, married a Venetian (1818), and turned his mind to Italian literature. His *Letters from the North of Italy to Henry Hallam, Esq.* (1819), his version of Casti's *Animali Parlanti* (*The Court and Parliament of Beasts*, a Poem in Seven Cantos, 1819), his prose rendering of Berni's *Orlando Innamorato* (1823), and his verse translation of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1823–31), were the fruits of this taste.

In 1835 Rose published an epistle in verse, addressed to Frere; and in 1837 a collection of original verse, including the epistle, under the title of *Rhymes*. In the last long poem of the volume,

Digitized by Google

Venetian lady, rather in years, but not ugly—at least by candlelight. I saw them the other night at Madame

"Gundimore," Rose mentions some of the friends of his youth at Gundimore, his house near Muddiford. Among them were Louis Philippe, Dumouriez, Canning, Horner, "Honest Hallam, shrewd "and sage," "Frere the strenuous idler in Athenian masque"—

"Here Walter Scott has wooed the northern muse;
Here has with me rejoiced to walk or cruize;
Hence have we pricked through Yten's holt; where we
Have called to mind, how, under greenwood tree,
Pierced by the partner of his 'woodland craft,'
King Rufus bled by Tyrrel's random shaft.
. . . . .
Here Foscolo, escaped from Austria's reach,
In moody silence trod the sounding beach,
. . . . .
And these 'ribbed sands' was Coleridge pleased to pace
Whilst ebbing seas have hummed a rolling bass
To his rapt talk."

At the bottom of the following lines by Rose, Byron has scribbled this note: "These verses were sent to me by W. S. Rose from "Albaro, in the spring of 1818. They are good and true—and "Rose is a fine fellow—and one of the few English who understand "*Italy*—without which Italian is nothing:"—

"Venice, May, 1818.

1.

"Byron,* while you make gay what circle fits ye,
Bandy Venetian slang with the Benzòn,
Or play at company with the Albrizzi,
The self-pleas'd peasant, and patrician crone,
Grinanis, Mocenijas, Baltis, Rizzi,
Compassionate our cruel case,—alone—
Our pleasure an academy of frogs,
Who nightly serenade us from the bogs.

2.

"'Twixt Adige and 'twixt Brenta, by those hills,
Whose scenes the wandering Trojan so delighted,
With their sulphureous veins and gentle rills,
And meads, and fields with fruitful furrows dighted,
That he for these the pools which Zanthus fills,
And Ida and the lov'd Ascanius slighted;' †—
E'en from this spot I date my sad advices,
But I can't sympathise with good Anchises;

* I have *hunted* out a precedent for this unceremonious address.
† So says Arlosto.

Digitized by Google

Albrizzi's: he talks of returning in May. My love to the Hollands.

Ever yours very truly and affect^ly,

BYRON.

3.

"So take the picture from another hand,
And look at least for truth in my relation;
See a dull level for two miles expand,
Then hills, which break all healthy ventilation:
Hot ditches, and green pools, which stink and stand,
And reek with a mephitish exhalation;
(Fenc'd to the North, expos'd to the Scirocco)
Add the congenial climate of Morocco.

4.

"One glance at home!—We're chamber'd in a garret,
Because the other rooms were painted late;
Our sole resource the Poodle and the Parrot;
But Buffo 's cut his paw and 'keeps his state'
And Jacquot molts—for food; there's not a carrot,
Or pea within two miles; our soup is late
And seedy cabbage, mix'd in what's call'd rotten-pot.*
As for our wine; it might checkmate a Hottentot.

5.

"And yet we dine at half past one or two;
Not that we've either heart, or hope to eat,
But that we do not know what else to do;
For when at that long wish'd for hour we meet,
We gaze despondingly on roast and stew,
Exchange sad looks and curse the carrion-meat,
The stall which bred it, and the grass which fill'd it,
The slave who cook'd it, and the knave who kill'd it.

6.

"We look upon eternal flats of clover,
Without variety of paths, or smells;
See nought that's life beyond a beast or drover;
And only change our frogs for chimes and bells.
We've read what books we brought at least twice over.
But as I write, my list of miseries swells.
A life more melancholy never bred rhyme;
'Tis all we can to get it to be bed-time;

* *Pot-pourri* in French, *putrida* in Venetian.

Digitized by Google

P.S.—They have been crucifying *Othello* into an opera (*Otello*, by Rossini): the music good, but lugubrious; but as for the words, all the real scenes with Iago cut out, and the greatest nonsense inserted; the handkerchief turned into a *billet-doux*, and the first singer would not *black* his face, for some exquisite reasons assigned in the preface. Scenery, dresses, and music very good.

## 690.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, March 16, 1818.

MY DEAR TOM,—Since my last, which I hope that you have received, I have had a letter from our friend Samuel.[1] He talks of Italy this summer—won't you come with him? I don't know whether you would like our Italian way of life or not. * * * * *

They are an odd people. The other day I was

7.

"For 'tis too broiling hot to rove and ramble,
At least for one in my diseased condition.—
At length I have got thro' this long prèamble;
Now to the pith and pray'r of my petition!
Send me provision fresh from Murray's shamble,
And I shall hail you as my best physician.
Send it, I pray, by Padua's ill-nam'd jockey,*
*Recapito caffè di Pederocchi.*

8.

"But if you've had my pray'r in prose, by Bappi,
Forgive that I repeat things said before,
And lay to the account of our unhappy
Condition this unnecessary bore.
Think, we're reduc'd to play at *slipi, slapi,*
*Slorum*, and *cala braghe*, and *tra sette*,
With *Santo* the old bathing man and Betty."

* *Corriere di Padova.*

1. See p. 206, *note* 1.

Digitized by Google

telling a girl, "You must not come to-morrow, because "Margueritta is coming at such a time,"—(they are both about five feet ten inches high, with great black eyes and fine figures—fit to breed gladiators from—and I had some difficulty to prevent a battle upon a rencontre once before)—"unless you promise to be friends, and" —the answer was an interruption, by a declaration of war against the other, which she said would be a *Guerra di Candia*.[1] Is it not odd, that the lower order of Venetians should still allude proverbially to that famous contest, so glorious and so fatal to the Republic?

They have singular expressions, like all Italians. For example, *Viscere*—as we should say, "My love," or "My heart," as an expression of tenderness. Also, "I "would go for you into the midst of a hundred *knives*." —"*Massa ben*," excessive attachment,—literally, "I "wish you well even to killing." Then they say (instead of our way, "Do you think I would do you such harm?") "Do you think I would *assassinate* you in such a man- "ner?"—"*Tempo perfido*," bad weather; "*Strade per-* "*fide*," bad roads,—with a thousand other allusions and metaphors, taken from the state of society and habits in the middle ages.

I am not so sure about *massa*, whether it don't mean *massa*, i.e. a great deal, a *mass*, instead of the interpretation I have given it. But of the other phrases I am sure.

Three o' th' clock—I must "to bed, to bed, to bed,"[2]

1. Venice lost Candia to Turkey, September 29, 1669, after a siege of twenty-five years. Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza xiv.—

> "Though making many slaves, Herself still free,
> And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite;
> Witness Troy's rival, Candia!"

2. *Macbeth*, act v. sc. 2.

Digitized by Google

as mother Siddons, that tragical friend of the mathematical * * *, says. * * * * * *

Have you ever seen—I forget what or whom—no matter. They tell me Lady Melbourne is very unwell. I shall be so sorry. She was my greatest *friend*, of the feminine gender:—when I say "friend," I mean *not* mistress, for that's the antipode. Tell me all about you and every body—how Sam is—how you like your neighbours, the Marquis [1] and Marchesa, etc., etc.

Ever, etc.

## 691.—To John Murray.

Venice, March 25, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—I have your letter, with the account of *Beppo*, for which I sent you 4 new stanzas a fortnight ago, in case you print, or reprint.

As for the "amiable Man," what "do the honest "Man in my Closet?" Why did the "amiable man" write me a Scurvy *anonymous* letter at Rome? (ask Mr. Hobhouse for it, he has it with the book and his remarks), telling me that out of ten things eight were good for nothing? I dare say the dog was right enough; but he should put his name to a note. A man may *print* anonymously, but not write letters so; it is contrary to all the courtesies of life and literature.

I had no prejudice against the pompous buffoon. I endured his acquaintance. I permitted his coxcombry. I endeavoured to advance his petty attempts at Celebrity. I moved the Sub-Committee, and Kinnaird, and Kean, and all the Aristocracy of Drury Lane, to bring out his

1. Moore was now living at Sloperton, close to the Marquis of Lansdowne, at Bowood.

Digitized by Google

play, whose unutterable Mediocrity gave it a great chance of success. I bore with him—the Bore—

> Bear witness all ye Gods of Rome and Greece,
> How willing I have been to keep the peace.

But he *would* begin; so he would, and see what he gets by it. It quite distresses me to be obliged to do such things—but Self Defence you know—what can a man do?

Croker's is a good guess; but the style is not English, it is Italian;—Berni[1] is the original of *all*. Whistlecraft was *my* immediate *model!* Rose's *Animali*[2] I never saw till a few days ago,—they are excellent. But (as I said above) Berni is the father of that kind of writing, which, I think, suits our language, too, very well;—we shall see by the experiment. If it does, I'll send you a volume in a year or two, for I know the Italian way of life well, and in time may know it yet better; and as for the verse and the passions, I have them still in tolerable vigour.

1. Francesco Berni (1490–1536) gave his name to the mock-heroic style of Italian literature (*Bernesque*) in his *rifacimento* of Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato*, and his *Capitoli* in easy familiar verse. In his later years he is said to have been a Protestant. His refusal to administer a poisoned chalice to Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici probably cost him his life. Berni's *Orlando* (published after his death in 1541) was partly translated by Rose in 1823.

2. *The Court and Parliament of Beasts, freely translated from the Animali Parlanti of Casti*, by William Stewart Rose (1819). The Abate Giovanni Battista Casti (1721–1803), in his *Animali*, revives the idea of Reynard the Fox by satirizing the rule of the stronger. Byron had seen the original, which was published in 1802. Major Gordon (*Personal Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 328), who met him at Brussels in 1816, says, "I happened to have a copy of the *Novelle Amorose* "of Casti, a severe satire on the monks, which Lord Byron had "never seen. I presented him with it, and in his letter to me from "Geneva he writes, 'I cannot tell you what a treat your gift of "Casti has been to me; I have almost got him by heart. I had "read his *Animali Parlanti*, but I think these *Novelle* much "better. I long to go to Venice to see the manners so admirably "described.'"

Digitized by Google

If you think that it will do *you* or the work, or works, any good, you may, or may not, put my name to it; *but first consult the knowing ones*. It will, at any rate, show them that I can write cheerfully, and repel the charge of monotony and mannerism.

Yours truly,

B.

## 692.—To John Murray.

Venice, April 11, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—Will you send me by letter, packet, or parcel, half a dozen of the coloured prints from Holmes's miniature (the latter done shortly before I left your country, and the prints about a year ago). I shall be obliged to you, as some people here have asked me for the like. It is a picture of my upright self done for Scrope B. Davies, Esq.

When you can reprint *Beppo*, instead of line

"Gorging the little Fame he gets all raw"

insert

"Gorging the slightest slice of Flattery raw,"—

because we have the word "Fame" in the preceding stanza (also as a rhyme too). Perhaps the line is now a little weakened, because "all raw" expresses the Cormorant Cameleon's avidity for air, or inflation of his vicious vanity; but—ask Mr. Gifford, and Mr. Hobhouse, and, as they think, so let it be, for, though repetition is only the "soul of Ballad singing" and best avoided in describing the Harlequin jacket of a Mountebank, yet anything is better than weakening an expression, or a thought. I would rather be as bouncing as Nat. Lee—than wishey-washy like—like—

Digitized by Google

He has twelve thousand pounds a year—
I do not mean to rally—
His songs at sixpence would be dear;
So give them gratis, Gally!
And if this statement should seem queer,
Or set down in a hurry,
Go ask (if he will be sincere)
His publisher—John Murray.
Come, say, how many have been sold
And don't stand shilly-shally,
Of bound and lettered, red and gold
Well printed works of Gally?

For Astley's Circus Upton writes
And also for the Surry;
Fitzgerald weekly (or *weakly*) still recites,
Though grinning Critics worry;
Miss Holford's Peg, and Sotheby's *Sall*,
In fame exactly tally;
From Stationers Hall to Grocers Stall
They go—and so does Gally.

He hath a Seat in Parliament,
So fat and passing healthy,
And surely he should be content
With these, and being wealthy,
But Great Ambition will misrule
Men at all risks to sally,—
Now makes a poet—now a fool—
And *we* know *which*—of Gally.

Between whom and Sotheby there is the difference of the foam of a washing-tub from the froth of a Syllabub, and *you* talk to me of sparing the Knight because he probably is—but no matter. I was going to say a good

Digitized by Google

customer, but you are above that. However *don't* I *spare* him? Do I molest him? I laugh at him in my letters to you, and that is all, and to these I would have confined myself with regard to t'other fellow if *he* had not begun first. But in these at least I may say a coxcomb is a coxcomb, so allow me to expectorate the ineffable contempt I have for the genus of that animal. Do you ever find me attack the real men of merit, even privately?—do I not delight in them? But—

Some in the playhouse like to row,
  Some with the watch to battle,
Exchanging many a midnight blow
  To Music of the Rattle.
Some folks like rowing on the Thames,
  Some rowing in an Alley,
But all the Row my fancy claims
  Is *rowing* of my *Galley*.

If you like the same chorus to another tune of

"Tally i. o. the Grinder."

1.

Mrs. Wilmot sate scribbling a play,
  Mr. Sotheby sate sweating behind her,
But what are all three to the lay
  Of Gally i. o. the Grinder?
Gally i. o. i. o.

2.

I bought me some books t'other day
  And sent them down stairs to the binder,
But the Pastry-Cook carried away
  My Gally i. o. the Grinder.

Digitized by Google

3.

I wanted to kindle my taper,
And called to the Maid to remind her,
And what should she bring me for paper
But Gally i. o. the Grinder?

4.

* * * * *

Why have you not sent me an answer, and list of subscribers to the translation of the Armenian *Eusebius*? of which I sent you six copies of the printed prospectus (in French) two moons ago. Have you had the letter? —I shall send you another:—you must not neglect my Armenians. Tooth-powder, Magnesia, Tincture of Myrrh, tooth-brushes, diachylon plaister, and Peruvian bark, are my personal demands.

Strahan, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
Patron and publisher of rhymes,
For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,
My Murray.

To thee, with hope and terror dumb,
The unfledged M.S. authors come;
Thou printest all—and sellest some—
My Murray.

Upon thy table's baize so green
The last new *Quarterly* is seen;
But where is thy new Magazine,
My Murray?

Digitized by Google

Along thy sprucest book-shelves shine
The works thou deemest most divine—
The *Art of Cookery*,[1] and mine,
My Murray.

Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,
And Sermons to thy mill bring grist;
And then thou hast the *Navy List*,
My Murray.

And Heaven forbid I should conclude
Without the "Board of Longitude,"
Although this narrow paper would,
My Murray!

## 693.—To John Murray.

Venice, April 12, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—This letter will be delivered by Signor Gio^a. Bat^a. Missiaglia, proprietor of the Apollo library, and the principal publisher and bookseller now in Venice. He sets out for London with a view to business and correspondence with the English Booksellers; and it is in the hope that it may be for your mutual advantage that I furnish him with this letter of introduction to you. If you can be of use to him, either by recommendation to others, or by any personal attention on your own part, you will oblige him and gratify me. You may also perhaps both be able to derive advantage, or establish some mode of literary communication, pleasing to the public, and beneficial to one another.

At any rate, be civil to him for my sake, as well as

1. Mrs. Rundell's *Domestic Cookery*, published in 1806, was one of Murray's most successful books. In 1822 he purchased the copyright from Mrs. Rundell for £2000. (See *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 375.)

Digitized by Google

for the honour and glory of publishers and authors, now and to come for evermore.

With him I also consign a great number of MSS. letters written in English, French, and Italian, by various English established in Italy during the last century:—the names of the writers, Lord Hervey, Lady M. W. Montague (hers are but few—some billets-doux in French to Algarotti,[1] and one letter in English-Italian, and all sorts of jargon, to the same), Gray, the poet (one letter), Mason two or three, Garrick, Lord Chatham, David Hume, and many of lesser note,—all addressed to Count Algarotti. Out of these, I think, with discretion,

1. Francesco Algarotti (1712–1764), one of the most versatile of Italian writers, left behind him works which were published in a collected edition of 17 volumes at Venice in 1791–4. A friend of Frederick the Great, Voltaire's *caro cygno di Padova*, he was the correspondent of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, of Lord Chesterfield, and other distinguished Englishmen.

Algarotti's tomb was erected at Pisa by Frederick the Great, with the following inscription: *Algarotto Ovidii Æmulo Neutoni Discipulo Fridericus Magnus*. His Dialogues on Newton's Optics, dedicated to the King of Prussia (Berlin, 1772), are prefaced by verses written to Algarotti by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Lord Hervey, Voltaire, and others. Lady Mary's lines begin thus—

> "Such various learning in this Work appears,
> As seems the slow result of length of years;
> Yet these dark truths explain'd in such a way,
> As only youth cou'd write a stile so gay."

Voltaire's Sonnet opens with the lines—

> "On a vanté vos murs bâtis sur l'onde;
> Et votre ouvrage est plus durable qu'eux;
> Venise et lui semblent faits par les Dieux;
> Mais le dernier sera plus cher au monde."

Lady Mary's lines are not, it may be added, included in Mr. Moy Thomas's edition of her works (2 vols., 1893). In a letter written to Sir James Steuart, July 19, 1759, Lady Mary thus refers to Algarotti: "Dr. J—— died at Rome with as much stoicism as "Cato at Utica, . . . I am afraid neither Algarotti nor Valsinura "will make their exit with so good a grace. . . . Algarotti is at "Bologna, I believe, composing panegyrics on whoever is victor in "this uncertain war" (*ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 366).

Digitized by Google

an amusing miscellaneous volume of letters might be extracted, provided *Israeli* or some other good editor were disposed to undertake the selection, and preface, and a few notes, etc.

The proprietor of these is a friend of mine, *Dr. Aglietti*,[1]—a great name in Italy,—and if you are disposed to publish, it will be for *his benefit*, and it is to and for him that you will name a price, if you take upon you the work. *I* would *edite* it myself, but am too far off, and too lazy to undertake it; but I wish that it could be done. The letters of Lord Hervey, in Mr. Rose's opinion and mine, are good; and the *short* French love letters *certainly* are Lady M. W. Montague's—the *French* not good, but the sentiments beautiful. Gray's letter good; and Mason's tolerable. The whole correspondence must be *well weeded*; but this being done, a small and pretty popular volume might be made of it.—There are many ministers' letters—Gray, the Ambassador at Naples, Horace Mann, and others of the same kind of animal.

I thought of a preface, defending Lord Hervey against Pope's attack, but Pope—*quoad* Pope, the poet

1. Francesco Aglietti (1757–1836) edited the *Opere* of Algarotti (Venezia, 1791–94). Valery (*Voyages en Italie*, liv. vi. chap. ix. tom. i. p. 400) says that the Palace Giustiniani-Lolin contained his fine collections of books, paintings, and engravings. In *note* v. to *Marino Faliero*, Byron speaks of Aglietti as one of the living exceptions to the "decay and degeneracy" of Venice, and he mentions him in the Dedicatory letter to *Childe Harold*, Canto IV., among the "great names" of contemporary Italy. In Madden's *Memoir, etc., of the Countess of Blessington* (vol. ii. p. 236) is a letter dated January 1, 1838, from Lady Blessington to the Countess Guiccioli, asking her "to have inquiries made, or a few lines inserted in the "newspapers there [at Venice], stating that if any one will deliver "up the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague to Signor "Algarotti, written many years ago, they will be bought at a "reasonable price. . . . The letters were, some years ago, in the "possession of an inn-keeper at Venice."

Digitized by Google

—against the world, in the unjustifiable attempts at depreciation begun by Warton and carried on to and at this day by the new School of Critics and Scribblers, who think themselves poets because they do *not* write like Pope. I have no patience with such cursed humbug and bad taste; your whole generation are not worth a canto of the *Rape of the Lock*, or the *Essay on Man*, or the *Dunciad*, or "anything that is his."—But it is three in the matin, and I must go to bed.

Yours always,

BYRON.

## 694.—To Charles Hanson.

Venice, April 15th 1818.

DEAR CHARLES,—I have only time by the Post for five words, to say that *I can not* on any account whatever proceed to Geneva, and that the Messenger must be written to to come on to *Venice* direct. I am unwell, and can't move.

Excuse haste; the post is going out; but recollect that as I have said, so must it be, or not at all.

Yours ever and truly,

BYRON.

## 695.—To John Murray.

Venice, April 15th 1818.

DEAR SIR,—Two words in haste to deliver to Mr. Hanson, or to my friend Mr. Hobhouse to convey to him.

I will *not* go to Geneva, nor stir from Italy (or Venice at present), for any human power or interest whatever. It is as easy for the Messenger to proceed here as there,



Digitized by Google

or for me to go there, and every step nearer to England would be to me disgusting.

Let this be said to H[anson] as my positive determination.

Yours in haste, the post just going,

B.

## 696.—To John Murray.

Venice, April 17, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—A few days ago, I wrote to you a letter, requesting you to desire Hanson to desire his messenger to come on from Geneva to Venice, because I won't go from Venice to Geneva; and if this is not done, the messenger may be damned, with him who missent him. Pray reiterate my request.

With the proofs returned, I sent two additional stanzas for Canto 4th: did they arrive?

Your *Monthly* reviewer[1] has made a mistake: *Cavaliere*, alone, is well enough; but "*Cavalier' ser-*" "*vente*" has always the *e* mute in conversation, and omitted in writing; so that it is not for the sake of metre; and pray let Griffiths[2] know this, with my compliments. I humbly conjecture that I know as much of Italian society and language as any of his people; but, to make assurance doubly sure, I asked, at the Countess Benzoni's last[3] night, the question of more than one

1. *Beppo* is reviewed in the *Monthly Review* for March, 1818 (pp. 285–290). On p. 286 the reviewer says that Laura "accordingly connects herself with a Venetian Count, who acts as her '*Cavalier servente*' for a long period." In a note he adds, "*Metri causâ*, the author cuts down the *Cavaliere* to *Cavalier*; which an Italian may deem very *cavalier treatment*."

2. For Griffiths, proprietor and editor of the *Monthly Review*, see *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 102, *note* 1.

3. "The charms of the Countess Marina Benzoni," says Lady

Digitized by Google

person in *the office* and of these "Cavalier*i* servent*i*" (in the plural, recollect) I found that they all accorded in pronouncing for "cavalier' servent*e*" in the *singular* number. I wish Mr. Hodgson (or whoever Griffiths' Scribbler may be) would not talk of what he don't understand. Such fellows are not fit to be intrusted with Italian, even in a quotation.

Sotheby again! he had best be quiet—but no. Ask him from *me*, in so many words, did he, or did he not, write an anonymous note at Rome accompanying a Copy of the *Castle of Chillon*, etc.? ask him from *me*, and let him be confronted with the note now in the possession of Mr. Hobhouse. He (Sotheby) is a vile, stupid old Coxcomb, and if I do not weed him from the surface of the Society he infests and infects, may—may —but I won't adjure a great power for so scabby an

Morgan, "have been sung by all who ever tingled a guitar to the "tune of *La Biondina in Gondoletta;* but the spell of her Venetian "manner, its softness and *naïveté*, are less susceptible of description. "Reviving recollections of the brilliant and pleasurable circles over "which she once presided, by many a pleasant anecdote well "recited, and often recurring to the present sad and hapless state of "her unfortunate country, to the last doing its honours by foreign "visitants, and still presenting the lineaments and colouring of the "portraits of Titian and Giorgione, she resembles the priestess of "some desolated temple, still hovering round the ruined altars "whose fires are extinct and festivals eclipsed for ever."—*Italy*, vol. ii. p. 472.

"Les plus brillants salons de Paris," writes Stendhal (*Rome, Naples, et Florence*, ed. 1854, pp. 393, 394), "sont bien insipides "et bien *secs* comparés à la société de Madame Benzoni." Rose, in his lines to Byron (p. 212, *note*, stanza 1) speaks of him as bandying "Venetian slang with the Benzòn," whose *salon* seems to have been less stiff and literary than that of Madame d'Albrizzi. Moore, in his Diary for October 8, 1819 (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. iii. pp. 26, 27), says, "From the Contessa d'Albrizzi we went to "Madame B., who, they tell me, is one of the last of the Venetian "ladies of the old school of nobility; thoroughly profligate, of "course, in which she but resembles the new school. Her manners "very pleasant and easy. She talked to me much about Byron; "bid me scold him for the scrape he had got into; said that, till "this, *Il se conduisait si bien.*"

Digitized by Google

object as that wretched leper of literature—that Itch of Scribbling personified—Sotheby. It is ten o'clock, and time to dress.

Yours,
B^N.

## 597.—To John Murray.

April 23, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—The time is past in which I could feel for the dead,—or I should feel for the death of Lady Melbourne,[1] the best, and kindest, and ablest female I ever knew—old or young. But "I have supped full of "horrors,"[2] and events of this kind leave only a kind of numbness worse than pain,—like a violent blow on the elbow, or on the head. There is one link the less between England and myself.

Now to business. I presented you with *Beppo*, as part of the contract for Canto 4^th.—considering the price you are to pay for the same, and intending it to eke you out in case of public caprice or my own poetical failure. If you choose to suppress it entirely, at Mr. Sotheby's suggestion, you may do as you please. But recollect it is not to be published in a *garbled* or *mutilated* state. I reserve to my friends and myself the right of correcting the press;—if the publication continue, it is to continue in its present form.

If Mr. S. fancies, or feels, himself alluded to and injured by the allusion, he has his redress—by law—by reply—or by such other remedy personal or poetical

1. For Lady Melbourne, who died at Melbourne House, April 6, 1818, see *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 163, *note* 1.
2. *Macbeth*, act v. sc. 5.

Digitized by Google

as may seem good to himself, or any person or persons acting for, by, or at his suggestion.

My reasons for presuming Mr. S. to be the author of the anonymous note sent to me at Rome last Spring, with a copy of "Chillon," etc., with marginal notes by the writer of the billet were—firstly, Similarity in the handwriting: of which I could form a recollection from correspondence between Mr. S. and myself on the subject of *Ivan* a play offered to D. L. Theatre; 2$^{dly}$, the *Style*, more especially the word "*Effulgence*," a phrase which clinched my conjecture as decisively as any coincidence between Francis and Junius: 3$^{dly}$, the paucity of English *then* at Rome, and the circumstances of Mr. S.'s return from Naples, and the delivery of this note and book occurring at the same period, he having then and there arrived with a party of Blue-Stocking Bi—women, I would say, of the same complexion whom he afterwards conveyed to the Abbate Morelli's at Venice—to view his Cameo, where they so tormented the poor old man (nearly twenty in number, all with pencil and note book in hand and questions in infamous Italian and villainous French), that it became the talk of Venice, as you may find by asking my friend Mr. Hoppner or others who were then at Venice; 4$^{thly}$, my being aware of Mr. S.'s patronage and anxiety on such occasions, which led me to the belief that, with very good intentions, he might nevertheless blunder in his mode of giving as well as taking opinions; and 5$^{thly}$, the Devil who made Mr. S. one author and me another.

As Mr. Sotheby says that he did not write this letter, etc., I am ready to believe him; but for the firmness of my former persuasion, I refer to Mr. Hobhouse, who can inform you how sincerely I erred on this point. He has also the note—or, at least, *had* it, for I gave it to him

Digitized by Google

with my verbal comments thereupon. As to *Beppo*, I will not alter or suppress a syllable for any man's pleasure but my own.

If there are resemblances between Botherby and Sotheby, or Sotheby and Botherby, the fault is not mine, but in the person who resembles,—or the persons who trace a resemblance. *Who* find out this resemblance? Mr. S.'s *friends*. *Who* go about moaning over him and laughing? Mr. S.'s *friends*. Whatever allusions Mr. S. may imagine, or whatever may or may not really exist, in the passages in question, I can assure him that there is not a literary man, or a pretender to Literature, or a reader of the day—in the World of London, who does not think and express more obnoxious opinions of his Blue-Stocking Mummeries than are to be found in print, and I for one think and say that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, from past experience and present information, Mr. Sotheby has made, and makes, himself highly ridiculous.

He may be an amiable man, a moral man, a good father, a good husband, a respectable and devout individual. I have nothing to say against all this; but I have something to say to Mr. S.'s literary foibles, and to the wretched affectations and systematized Sophistry of many men, women, and Children, now extant and absurd in and about London and elsewhere;—which and whom, in their false pretensions and nauseous attempts to make learning a nuisance and society a Bore, I consider as fair game—to be brought down on all fair occasions, and I doubt not, by the blessing of God on my honest purpose, and the former example of Mr. Gifford and others, my betters, before my eyes, to extirpate, extinguish and eradicate such as come within the compass of my intention. And this is my opinion, of

Digitized by Google

which you will express as much or as little as you think proper.

Did you receive two additional stanzas, to be inserted towards the close of Canto 4th? [1] Respond, that (if not) they may be sent.

Tell Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. Hanson that they may as well expect Geneva to come to me, as that I should go to Geneva. The messenger may go on or return, as he pleases; I won't stir: and I look upon it as a piece of singular absurdity in those who know me imagining that I should;—not to say *Malice*, in attempting unnecessary torture. If, on the occasion, my interests should suffer, it is their neglect that is to blame; and they may all be damned together. You may tell them this, and add that nothing but force or necessity shall stir me one step towards the places to which they would wring me. I wonder particularly at Mr. Hobhouse's (who is in possession of my opinions) sanctioning such a conspiracy against my tranquillity.

If your literary matters prosper, let me know. If *Beppo* pleases, you shall have more in a year or two in the same mood. And so "Good morrow to you, good "Master Lieutenant." [2]

Yours,

B.

## 698.—To Charles Hanson.

Venice, May 31st 1818.

Dear Charles,—I have received your letter, and shall expect the Messenger. On his return you will take the proper steps in conjunction with Mr. Kinnaird for

1. These stanzas were clxxvii. and clxxviii., raising the number of stanzas to 186, and completing Canto IV. of *Childe Harold*.
2. *Othello*, act iii. sc. 1.

Digitized by Google

the liquidation of the debts; settling, however, *all* the other claims prior to the Massingberd annuities, for which I conceive that terms less exorbitant may be made.

I also wish to have your father's bill; and I could desire, if possible, that something definitive should be adjusted with regard to *Rochdale*. Can't you sell it for me? You seem to have acted so well hitherto in the present Newstead purchase (as far as it has hitherto advanced), that it might encourage you to try a sale for *Rochdale* also.

I think you will agree with me that the Settlement with the Creditors will be more easily and readily made during my absence from England, than if I were upon the spot. Make the best terms you can with them consistent with fairness of dealing to them and to myself.

I request that any balance due, or received, from Newstead, or Sir R. Noel may be paid in to my account at Morland's, and the credit sent out by post immediately. If any such has been sent in by you, I have not received as yet the letter of advice from them.

For Old Murray I leave you *Carte blanche*, and request you to deduct from remittances any sum requisite for his comfort and well doing, and the same half yearly.

Recommending to you the above requests, particularly with regard to *Rochdale*, and desiring my best regards to you and yours,

Believe me, ever and very truly yours,

BYRON.

P.S.—It is the more requisite that you should act for me with all convenient speed and decision, as I am not in the present intention of quitting Venice for some years, having just taken a house in the city, and another in the country, for *three years*.

Digitized by Google

## 699.—To James Wedderburn Webster.

Venice, May 31st 1818.

DEAR WEBSTER,—I am truly sorry to hear of your domestic misfortune, and, as I know the inefficacy of words, shall turn from the subject.

I am not even aware of your return to France, where I presume that you are a resident. For my own part after going down to Florence and Rome last year, I returned to Venice, where I have since remained—and may probably continue to remain for some years—being partial to the people, the language and the habits of life; there are few English here, and those mostly birds of passage, excepting one or two who are domesticated like myself.

I have the Palazzo Mocenigo on the Canal' Grande for three years to come, and a pretty Villa in the Euganean hills for the Summer for nearly the same term.

While I remain in the city itself, I keep my horses on an Island with a good beach, about half a mile from the town, so that I get a gallop of some miles along the shore of the Adriatic daily; the Stables belong to the Fortress, but are let on fair terms.

I was always very partial to Venice, and it has not hitherto disappointed me; but I am not sure that the English in general would like it. I am sure that I should *not*, if *they* did; but, by the benevolence of God, they prefer Florence and Naples, and do not infest us greatly here. In other respects it is very agreeable for Gentlemen of desultory habits—women—wine—and wassail being all extremely fair and reasonable—theatres, etc., good—and Society (after a time) as pleasant as any where else (at least to my mind), if you will live with

Digitized by Google

them in their own way—which is different of course from the Ultramontane in some degree.

The Climate is Italian and that's enough, and the Gondolas, etc., etc., and habits of the place make it like a romance, for it is by no means even now the most regular and correct moral city in the universe. Young and old—pretty and ugly—high and low—are employed in the laudable practice of Lovemaking—and though most Beauty is found amongst the middling and lower classes —this of course only renders their amatory habits more universally diffused.

I shall be very glad to hear from or of you when you are so disposed—and with my best regards to Lady Frances—believe me,

Very truly yours,

B.

P.S.—If ever you come this way, let me have a letter beforehand, in case I can be of use.

## 700.—To John Cam Hobhouse.[1]

Venice, June, 1818.

Sir,—With great grief I inform you of the death of my late dear Master, my Lord, who died this morning at ten of the Clock of a rapid decline and slow fever, caused by anxiety, sea-bathing, women, and riding in the Sun against my advice.

He is a dreadful loss to every body, mostly to me, who have lost a master and a place—also, I hope you, Sir, will give me a charakter.

I saved in his service as you know several hundred pounds. God knows how, for I don't, nor my late master

1. The letter purports to be from Byron's valet, Fletcher.

Digitized by Google

neither; and if my wage was not always paid to the day, still it was or is to be paid sometime and somehow. You, Sir, who are his executioner won't see a poor Servant wronged of his little all.

My dear Master had several phisicians and a Priest: he died a Papish, but is to be buried among the Jews in the Jewish burying ground; for my part I don't see why —he could not abide them when living nor any other people, hating whores who asked him for money.

He suffered his illness with great patience, except that when in extremity he twice damned his friends and said they were selfish rascals—you, Sir, particularly and Mr. Kinnaird, who had never answered his letters nor complied with his repeated requests. He also said he hoped that your new tragedy would be damned—God forgive him—I hope that my master won't be damned like the tragedy.

His nine whores are already provided for, and the other servants; but what is to become of me? I have got his Cloathes and Carriages, and Cash, and everything; but the Consul quite against law has clapt his seal and taken an inventary and swears that *he* must account to my Lord's heirs—who they are, I don't know—but they ought to consider poor Servants and above all his Vally de Sham.

My Lord never grudged me perquisites—my wage was the least I got by him; and if I did keep the Countess (she is, or ought to be, a Countess, although she is upon the town) Marietta Monetta Piretta, after passing my word to you and my Lord that I would not never no more—still he was an indulgent master, and only said I was a damned fool, and swore and forgot it again. What could I do? she said as how she should die, or kill herself if I did not go with her, and so I did—and kept

Digitized by Google

her out of my Lord's washing and ironing—and nobody can deny that, although the charge was high, the linen was well got up.

Hope you are well, Sir—am, with tears in my eyes,

Yours faithfoolly to command,

W^M^ FLETCHER.

P.S.—If you know any Gentleman in want of a Wally—hope for a charakter. I saw your late Swiss Servant in the Galleys at Leghorn for robbing an Inn—he produced your recommendation at his trial.

## 701.—To Thomas Moore.

Palazzo Mocenigo, Canal Grande, Venice, June 1, 1818.

Your letter is almost the only news, as yet, of Canto fourth, and it has by no means settled its fate—at least, does not tell me how the "Poeshie" has been received by the public. But, I suspect, no great things,—firstly, from Murray's "horrid stillness;" secondly, from what you say about the stanzas running into each other,[1] which I take *not* to be *yours*, but a notion you have been dinned with among the Blues. The fact is, that the *terza rima* of the Italians, which always *runs* on and in, may have led me into experiments, and carelessness into conceit—or conceit into carelessness—in either of which events failure will be probable, and my fair woman, *superne*, end in a fish;[2] so that *Childe Harold* will be like the mermaid, my family crest, with the fourth Canto

1. "I had said, I think, in my letter to him, that this practice of "carrying one stanza into another was 'something like taking on "horses another stage without baiting'" (Moore).

2. "Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne."
Horace, *Ars Poetica*, line 4.

Digitized by Google

for a tail thereunto. I won't quarrel with the public, however, for the "Bulgars" are generally right; and if I miss now, I may hit another time:—and so, the "gods "give us joy." [1]

You like *Beppo*, that's right. I have not had the Fudges [2] yet, but live in hopes. I need not say that your successes are mine. By the way, Lydia White [3] is here, and has just borrowed my copy of *Lalla Rookh*. * *

Hunt's letter is probably the exact piece of vulgar coxcombry you might expect from his situation. He is a good man, with some poetical elements in his chaos; but spoilt by the Christ-Church Hospital and a Sunday newspaper,—to say nothing of the Surrey gaol, which conceited him into a martyr. But he is a good man. When I saw *Rimini* in MS.,[4] I told him that I deemed it good poetry at bottom, disfigured only by a strange style. His answer was, that his style was a system, or *upon system*, or some such cant; and, when a man talks of system, his case is hopeless: so I said no more to him, and very little to any one else.

He believes his trash of vulgar phrases tortured into compound barbarisms to be *old* English; and we may say of it as Aimwell says of Captain Gibbet's regiment, when the Captain calls it an "old corps,"—"the *oldest* "in Europe, if I may judge by your uniform." [5] He sent

1. *As You Like It*, act iii. sc. 3.
2. *The Fudge Family in Paris*, the material of which was collected by Moore in 1817, was published in the following year. The Preface, signed by "Thomas Brown the Younger," is dated April 17, 1818.
3. For Lydia White, see *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 332, *note* 2.
4. See *Letters*, vol. iii. pp. 226 and 417–422.
5. In *The Beaux' Stratagem*, act iii. sc. 2—
"*Aimwell.* What Regiment, may I be so bold?
"*Gibbet.* A marching Regiment, Sir, an old Corps.
"*Aimwell* (aside). Very old, if your Coat be Regimental."

Digitized by Google

out his *Foliage*[1] by Percy Shelley * * *, and, of all the ineffable Centaurs that were ever begotten by Self-love upon a Night-mare, I think "this monstrous Sagittary"[2] the most prodigious. *He* (Leigh H.) is an honest charlatan, who has persuaded himself into a belief of his own impostures, and talks Punch in pure simplicity of heart, taking himself (as poor Fitzgerald said of *him*self in the *Morning Post*)[3] for *Vates* in both senses, or nonsenses, of the word. Did you look at the translations of his own which he prefers to Pope and Cowper, and says so?[4]—Did you read his skimble-skamble about Wordsworth being at the head of his own *profession*,[5] in the *eyes* of *those* who followed it? I thought that poetry was an *art*, or an *attribute*, and not a *profession*;—but be it one, is that * * * * * * at the head of *your* profession in *your* eyes? I'll be curst if he is of *mine*, or ever shall be. He is the only one of us (but of us he is not) whose coronation I would oppose. Let them take Scott, Campbell, Crabbe, or you, or me, or any of the living, and throne him;—but not this new Jacob Behmen, this * * * * * * whose pride might have kept him true, even had his principles turned as perverted as his *soi-disant* poetry.

1. Leigh Hunt's *Foliage, or Poems Original and Translated*, appeared in 1818.

2. *Troïlus and Cressida*, act v. sc. 5, "The dreadful Sagittary "appals our numbers."

3. See *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 10, *note* 1.

4. The translations from Homer "are an experiment how far I "could give the intelligent reader, who is no scholar, a stronger "sense of the natural energy of the original, than has yet been "furnished him. Cowper's poetical vigour was spoiled by the over-"timidity of his constitution; and Pope, in that elegant mistake "of his in two volumes octavo, called Homer's *Iliad*, turns the "Dodonæan oak of his original into smooth little toys," etc., etc. —Hunt's *Foliage*, Preface, p. 31.

5. "Wordsworth is generally felt, among his own *profession*, to "be at the head of it."—*Ibid.*, p. 14.

Digitized by Google

But Leigh Hunt is a good man, and a good father—see his Odes to all the Masters Hunt;—a good husband—see his Sonnet to Mrs. Hunt;—a good friend—see his Epistles to different people;—and a great coxcomb and a very vulgar person in every thing about him. But that's not his fault, but of circumstances.

* * * * *

* * * * *

I do not know any good model for a life of Sheridan but that of *Savage*. Recollect, however, that the life of such a man may be made far more amusing than if he had been a Wilberforce;[1]—and this without offending the living, or insulting the dead. The Whigs abuse him; however, he never left them, and such blunderers deserve neither credit nor compassion.—As for his creditors,—remember, Sheridan *never had* a shilling, and was thrown, with great powers and passions, into the thick of the world, and placed upon the pinnacle of success, with no other external means to support him in his elevation. Did Fox * * * *pay his* debts?—or did Sheridan take a subscription? Was the * *'s drunkenness more excusable than his? Were his intrigues more notorious than those of all his contemporaries? and is his memory to be blasted, and theirs respected? Don't let yourself be led away by clamour, but compare him with the coalitioner Fox, and the pensioner Burke, as a man of principle, and with ten hundred thousand in personal views, and with none in talent, for he beat them all *out* and *out*. Without means, without connexion, without character, (which might be false at first, and make him mad afterwards from desperation,) he beat them all, in all he ever attempted. But alas, poor human nature! Good night or rather, morning. It is four, and the dawn gleams

1. See *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 241, *note*.

Digitized by Google

over the Grand Canal, and unshadows the Rialto. I must to bed; up all night—but, as George Philpot[1] says, "it's life, though, damme it's life!"

Ever yours,

B.

Excuse errors—no time for revision. The post goes out at noon, and I shan't be up then. I will write again soon about your *plan* for a publication.

## 702.—To Charles Hanson.

Venice, June 10th, 1818.

DEAR CHARLES,—I am very much surprized indeed at not receiving any advice of the papers being forwarded,—in preparation so long ago, and so far forward that you pressed me to go to Geneva to meet the bearer of them. I trust that, on receiving this letter, you will let me have some tidings of the causes of the delay, if of nothing else. I have lately written to you on this and other subjects, and will not trouble you further at present than to beg you will do your best in this matter, and believe me,

Yours ever affectly,

BYRON.

P.S.—My remembrances to your father and family. I have written *twice* lately—on the Newstead papers, Rochdale, and requesting a remittance and some information

1. "Young George Philpot," in Murphy's *Citizen* (act i. sc. 2), says, "Up all night—stripped of nine hundred pounds—pretty well "for one night!—picqued, repicqued, flammed, and capotted every "deal!—old Dry-beard shall pay all—is forty-seven good? No—"fifty good?—No?—no, no, no—to the end of the chapter—cruel "luck!—damn me, it's life though—this is life."

Digitized by Google

as to the time of the payments of the interest of the purchase-money.

I am now detained at Venice all the summer, instead of going into the country, waiting for your messenger.

## 703.—To John Murray.

Venice, June 16, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—Your last letter was dated the 28th of April. Consequently a much longer period has elapsed than usual without my hearing from you (or indeed from any one else), and, considering all things and the time you have chosen for this cessation, methinks it is not well done. If you have anything uncomfortable to say, recollect it must come out at last, and had better be said at once than retained to terminate a disagreeable suspense.

I have written repeatedly to Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. Kinnaird without the smallest effect, and am fortunate in such friends and correspondents. Most of my letters to them and you required an answer. The only thing Mr. H. has done has been to advise me to go to Geneva, which would have been the cause of much useless expense and trouble to no purpose, as the Hanson Messenger is not yet arrived, if even set out.

Tell Hobhouse that I trust his tragedy will be damned, and that the Chevalier de Brême has written to me a long letter, attacking *him* (Hobhouse) for abusing the Italian *Romantici* in his notes. Mr. H. will answer for himself. I never read the notes.

Yours very truly,

B.

P.S.—Mr. H. and Kid. will have something to say to



Digitized by Google

you from me; at least if they give themselves the trouble to comply with my request.

## 704.—To John Murray.

Venice, June 18, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—Business and the utter and inexplicable silence of all my correspondents render me impatient and troublesome. I wrote to Mr. Hanson for a balance which is (or ought to be) in his hands;—no answer. I expected the messenger with the Newstead papers two months ago, and, instead of him, I received a requisition to proceed to Geneva, which (from Hobhouse, who knows my wishes and opinions about approaching England) could only be irony or insult.

I must, therefore, trouble *you* to pay into my bankers' *immediately* whatever sum or sums you can make it convenient to do on our agreement; otherwise, I shall be put to the *severest* and most immediate inconvenience; and this at a time when, by every rational prospect and calculation, I ought to be in the receipt of considerable sums. Pray do not neglect this; you have no idea to what inconvenience you will otherwise put me. Hobhouse had some absurd notion about the disposal of this money in annuity (or God knows what), which I merely listened to when he was here to avoid squabbles and sermons; but I have occasion for the principal, and had never any serious idea of appropriating it otherwise than to answer my personal expenses. Hobhouse's wish is, if possible, to force me back to England: he will not succeed; and if he did, I would not stay. I hate the country, and like this; and all foolish opposition, of course, merely adds to the feeling. *Your* silence makes me doubt the success of Canto 4th. If it has failed, I

Digitized by Google

will make such deduction as you think proper and fair from the original agreement; but I could wish whatever is to be paid were remitted to me, without delay, through the usual channel, by course of post.

When I tell you that I have not heard a word from England since very early in May, I have made the eulogium of my friends, or the persons who call themselves so, since I have written so often and in the greatest anxiety. Thank God the longer I am absent, the less cause I see for regretting the country or its living contents.

I am yours, ever and truly,

BYRON.

P.S.—Tell Mr. Hobhouse that he has greatly offended all his friends at Milan by some part or other of his illustrations; that I hope (as an author) he will be damned; and that I will never forgive him (or anybody) the atrocity of their late neglect and Silence at a time when I wished particularly to hear (for every reason) from my friends.

## 705.—To John Murray.

Venice, June 25th, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—The Post having arrived without any answer to various letters of mine to you and others, I continue my determination of reminding you as usual that it might be as well to take some notice of my request for a few lines of reply.

I remain, yours, etc.,

B.

P.S.—Your last letter was dated April 28th. I wrote to you twice last week on business.

Digitized by Google

## 706.—To John Murray.

Venice, June 28, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—As I perceive that it continues in vain for me to expect any answer to my repeated letters, I shall write by next post to Mr. Moore to propose from me some things which I have in view for next year to the Messrs. Longman; and, as I think it fair not to do this without apprizing you of my intention, I hereby do apprize you and of the cause thereof, which is the neglect of my correspondence lately experienced. Recollect that it is your own doing, and, for any thing that appears to the contrary, may be your wish also.

I am, yours very truly,

BYRON.

## 707.—To John Murray.

June 30th, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—I continue to remind you that I have received no letters from your quarter. What your motives may have been for a neglect which has made me uneasy in one point of view, and has been of great inconvenience to me in another, I know not; but I tell you that I am not at all pleased with it—with the same sincerity which I used and will use with every one. One of my many letters was of recommendation to a Venetian now in London. I presume that he has delivered it, and imagine that it might have been acknowledged.

I am, yours very truly,

B.

P.S.—I will wait ten days longer; if by that time I do not hear from you, you will then receive the last letter to be addressed to you from me.

Digitized by Google

## 708.—To John Murray.

Venice, July 10, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter and the credit from Morlands, etc.; for whom I have also drawn upon you at sixty days' sight for the remainder, according to your proposition.

I am still waiting in Venice, in expectancy of the arrival of Hanson's clerk—what can detain him, I do not know; but I trust that Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. Kinnaird (when their political fit[1] is abated) will take the trouble to enquire and expedite him, as I have nearly a hundred thousand pounds depending upon the completion of the sale and the signature of the papers.

The draft on you is drawn up by Siri and Willhalm. I hope that the form is correct. I signed it two or three days ago, desiring them to forward it to Messrs. Morland and Ransom.

Your projected editions for November had better be postponed, as I have some things in project, or preparation, that may be of use to you, though not very important in themselves. I have completed an Ode on Venice; and have two Stories, one serious and one ludicrous (*à la Beppo*), not yet finished, and in no hurry to be so.

1. A general election took place in the summer of 1818. Kinnaird, nominated as a Reform candidate for Westminster, withdrew after three days' polling, and canvassed for Sir Francis Burdett, who was elected with Sir Samuel Romilly. Major Cartwright also withdrew. The Government candidate, Captain Sir Murray Maxwell, R.N., who had recently returned from a voyage to the Loochoo Islands, was defeated. The patriot mob so bespattered Maxwell that Scrope Davies said it must have reminded him of Spithead. Orator Hunt, also a candidate, was bottom of the poll. In the following November, on the death of Romilly, Kinnaird declined a second nomination, but seconded Hobhouse, who was defeated by George Lamb in March, 1819 (*Memoirs of Sir S. Romilly*, vol. iii. pp. 359–365). In July, 1819, Kinnaird was returned for Bishop's Castle, in Shropshire.

Digitized by Google

You talk of the letter to Hobhouse[1] being much admired, and speak of prose. I think of writing (for your full edition) some memoirs of my life, to prefix to them, upon the same model (though far enough, I fear, from reaching it) as that of Gifford, Hume, etc.; and this without any intention of making disclosures or remarks upon living people, which would be unpleasant to them: but I think it might be done, and well done. However, this is to be considered. I have *materials* in plenty, but the greater part of them could not be used by *me*, nor for these hundred years to come. However, there is enough without these, and merely as a literary man, to make a preface for such an edition as you meditate. But this by the way: I have not made up my mind.

I enclose you a *note* on the subject of *Parisina*, which Hobhouse can digest for you. It is an extract of particulars from a history of Ferrara.

I trust you have been attentive to Missiaglia, for the English have the character of neglecting the Italians, at present, which I hope you will redeem.

Yours in haste,

B.

## 709.—To John Murray.

Venice, July 17, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—I suppose that Aglietti will take whatever you offer, but till his return from Vienna I can make him no proposal; nor, indeed, have you authorised me to do so. The three French notes *are* by Lady Mary; also another half-English-French-Italian. They

1. The dedicatory letter prefixed to Canto IV. of *Childe Harold*.

Digitized by Google

are very pretty and passionate; it is a pity that a piece of one of them is lost. Algarotti seems to have treated her ill; but she was much his senior, and all women are used ill—or say so, whether they are or not.

I see the Mob have broken Lewchew's [1] head, it must have been but a foolish one to shew itself on the hustings. I do not know how a voyage to China is to qualify a man to represent Westminster, and cannot pity him for stepping off his quarter-deck. First he loses a ship, and then an Election, and then nearly his life; he seems to be a rare fellow.

I shall be glad of your books and powders. I am still in waiting for Hanson's clerk, but luckily not at Geneva. All my good friends wrote to me to hasten *there* to meet him, but not one had the good sense or the good nature to write afterwards to tell me that it would be time and a journey thrown away, as he could not set off for some months after the period appointed. If I *had* taken the journey on the general suggestion, I never would have spoken again to one of you as long as I existed. I have written to request Mr. Kinnaird, when the foam of his politics is wiped away, to extract a positive answer from that knave or blockhead H[anson], and not to keep me in a state of suspense upon the subject. I hope that Kinnaird, who has my power of attorney, keeps a look-out upon the gentleman, which is the more necessary, as I have a great dislike to the idea of coming over to look after him myself.

1. Sir M. Maxwell was on the 18th of June, 1818, nominated as one of the six candidates for Westminster. While he was standing on the hustings, "some person among the crowd flung a potatoe at "him, which, striking him on the side of the nose, inflamed his eye, "and put him to great inconvenience. He bore it, however, with "much good humour, assuring the Electors that, though he had just "received an injury, he felt the best wishes towards every one "around him" (*Morning Chronicle*, Friday, June 19, 1818).

Digitized by Google

I have several things begun, verse and prose, but none in much forwardness. I have written some six or seven sheets of a life, which I mean to continue, and send you when finished. It may perhaps serve for your projected editions. If you would tell me exactly (for I know nothing, and have no correspondents except on business) the state of the reception of our late publications, and the feeling upon them, without consulting any delicacies (I am too seasoned to require them), I should know how and in what manner to proceed. I should not like to give them too much, which may probably have been the case already; but, as I tell you, I know nothing.

I once wrote from the fullness of my mind and the love of fame, (not as an *end*, but a *means*, to obtain that influence over men's minds which is power in itself and in its consequences,) and now from habit and from avarice; so that the effect may probably be as different as the inspiration. I have the same facility, and indeed necessity, of composition, to avoid idleness (though idleness in a hot country is a pleasure), but a much greater indifference to what is to become of it, after it has served my immediate purpose. However, I should on no account like to——but I won't go on, like the Archbishop of Granada, as I am very sure that you dread the fate of Gil Blas, and with good reason.

Yours sincerely,

B.

P.S.—I have written some very savage letters to Mr. Hobhouse, Kinnaird, to you, and to Hanson, because the silence of so long a time made me tear off my remaining rags of patience. I have seen one or two late English publications which are no great things, except

Digitized by Google

*Rob Roy*.[1] I shall be glad of *Whistlecraft*. Does Coxcomb Wilmot get into Parliament?[2]

## 710.—To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

Venice, August 3d 1818.

DEAREST AUGUSTA,—I am not uncomfortable, but have been obliged to scold Hobhouse, etc., for not doing a thing or two for me in England in the way of business. At present they are done, and I am graciously appeased.

My little girl, Allegra[3] (the child I spoke to you of),

1. *Rob Roy* appeared December 31, 1817.
2. Wilmot was elected for Newcastle-under-Lyne.
3. Allegra had been brought out from England by the Shelleys and her mother, and sent on from Milan, in April, 1818, under the care of a Swiss nurse, Elise, afterwards Foggi, who had been in Mrs. Shelley's service. "The child, accordingly," says Moore's informant, "was but ill taken care of;—not that any blame could attach to "Lord Byron, for he always expressed himself most anxious for her "welfare, but because the nurse wanted the necessary experience. "The poor girl was equally to be pitied; for, as Lord Byron's house-"hold consisted of English and Italian men servants, with whom "she could hold no converse, and as there was no other female to "consult with and assist her in her charge, nothing could be more "forlorn than her situation proved to be."

Shelley thus describes Allegra at this time, in *Julian and Maddalo* (lines 141–158)—

"The following morn was rainy, cold and dim:
Ere Maddalo arose, I called on him,
And whilst I waited, with his child I played;
A lovelier toy sweet Nature never made,
A serious, subtle, wild, yet gentle being,
Graceful without design and unforeseeing,
With eyes—Oh speak not of her eyes!—which seem
Twin mirrors of Italian Heaven, yet gleam
With such deep meaning, as we never see
But in the human countenance; with me
She was a special favourite, I had nursed
Her fine and feeble limbs when she came first
To this bleak world; and she yet seemed to know
On second sight her antient playfellow,
Less changed than she was by six months or so;
For after her first shyness was worn out
We sate there, rolling billiard balls about,
When the Count entered——"

Digitized by Google

has been with me these three months: she is very pretty, remarkably intelligent, and a great favourite with every body; but, what is remarkable, much more like Lady Byron than her mother—so much so as to stupefy the learned Fletcher and astonish me. Is it not odd? I suppose she must also resemble her sister, Ada: she has very blue eyes, and that singular forehead, fair curly hair, and a devil of a Spirit—but that is Papa's.

I am in health, and yours,

B.

## 711.—To John Murray.

Venice, August 3d 1818.

DEAR SIR,—I beg you to forward the enclosed. It is too hot, and a Sirocco, so that I cannot write at length. Perhaps I shall have something for your November Edition—about 20 *sheets* of *long* and a few of letter paper are already written of "*the* Life" and I think of going through with it. We will see what sort of stuff it is and decide accordingly.

Tell young Hammond that his *Dama*—the Countess Sa fell into my hands after his departure, that the consequence was a violent quarrel between her and the Taruscelli,[1] who, finding us out, has been playing the devil, setting Fanni by the Ears with Melandri, her Roman Admirer, and, by means of espionage and anonymous letters, doing a world of mischief, besides row between herself and her Austrian, and finally between herself and me too. She is gone to Padua—by the blessing of the Gods. The Spd came back to-day from Treviso. *You* won't understand all this, but Hammond will; so tell him of it.

Ever yours,

BYRON.

1. Arpalice Taruscelli, a famous operatic singer.

Digitized by Google

## 712.—To John Murray.

Venice, August 26, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—You may go on with your edition, without calculating on the Memoir, which I shall not publish at present. It is nearly finished, but will be too long; and there are so many things, which, out of regard to the living, cannot be mentioned, that I have written with too much detail of that which interested me least; so that my autobiographical Essay would resemble the tragedy of Hamlet at the country theatre, recited "with "the part of Hamlet left out by particular desire."[1] I shall keep it among my papers; it will be a kind of Guide-post in case of death, and prevent some of the lies which would otherwise be told, and destroy some which have been told already.

The tales also are in an unfinished state, and I can fix no time for their completion: they are also *not* in the best manner. You must not, therefore, calculate upon any thing in time for this edition. The Memoir is already above forty-four sheets of very large, long paper, and will be about fifty or sixty; but I wish to go on leisurely; and when finished, although it might do a good deal for you at the time, I am not sure that it would serve any good purpose in the end to either, as it is full of many passions and prejudices, of which it has been impossible for me to keep clear:—I have not the patience.

Enclosed is a list of books which Dr. Aglietti would

1. The source of this quotation was asked in *Notes and Queries*, 3rd series, vol. xi. p. 518. But no reply was elicited. In Scott's Introduction to *The Talisman* (published 1825) he refers to "the "play-bill which is said to have announced the tragedy of Hamlet, "the character of the Prince of Denmark being left out." Byron seems to have embellished the play-bill by the addition of the words "by particular desire," if the bill itself is not a fiction.

Digitized by Google

be glad to receive by way of price for his MS. letters, if you are disposed to purchase at the rate of fifty pounds sterling. These he will be glad to have as part, and the rest *I* will give him in money, and you may carry it to the account of books, etc., which is in balance against us, deducting it accordingly. So that the letters are yours, if you like them, at this rate; and he and I are going to hunt for more Lady Montague letters, which he thinks of finding. I write in haste. Thanks for the article, and believe me,

Yours,

B.

P.S.—I shall write again in a few days having something to say.

## 713.—To Captain Basil Hall.[1]

Venice, August 31, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—Dr. Aglietti is the best physician, not only in Venice, but in Italy: his residence is on the

1. Captain Basil Hall, R.N. (1788–1844), had returned to England, October, 1817, from a voyage to Canton and the Eastern seas, of which he wrote an account (*Account of a Voyage of Discovery to the West Coast of Corea and the Great Loo-Choo Islands*, 1818). Posted a captain in November, 1817, he spent eighteen months in travelling on the Continent. His next, and last, appointment (the *Conway*, May, 1820) was on the coast of South America (*Extracts from a Journal written on the Coasts of Chili, Peru, and Mexico, in the years* 1820–2, 2 vols., 1823). Besides the two books mentioned above, and other works, Hall published three series of *Fragments of Voyages and Travels* (1831–3).

The following is Captain Hall's account of the circumstances in which the above note was written:—

"On the last day of August, 1818, I was taken ill with an ague "at Venice, and having heard enough of the low state of the medical "art in that country, I was not a little anxious as to the advice I "should take. I was not acquainted with any person in Venice to "whom I could refer, and had only one letter of introduction, which "was to Lord Byron; but as there were many stories floating about "of his Lordship's unwillingness to be pestered with tourists, I had

Digitized by Google

Grand Canal, and easily found; I forget the number, but am probably the only person in Venice who don't

"felt unwilling, before this moment, to intrude myself in that shape. "Now, however, that I was seriously unwell, I felt sure that this "offensive character would merge in that of a countryman in distress, "and I sent the letter by one of my travelling companions to Lord "Byron's lodgings, with a note, excusing the liberty I was taking, "explaining that I was in want of medical assistance; and saying "I should not send to any one till I heard the name of the person "who, in his Lordship's opinion, was the best practitioner in "Venice.

"Unfortunately for me, Lord Byron was still in bed, though it "was near noon; and still more unfortunately, the bearer of my "message scrupled to awake him, without first coming back to con- "sult me. By this time I was in all the agonies of a cold ague fit, "and, therefore, not at all in a condition to be consulted upon any "thing—so I replied pettishly, 'Oh, by no means disturb Lord "Byron on my account—ring for the landlord, and send for any one "he recommends.' This absurd injunction being forthwith and "literally attended to, in the course of an hour I was under the "discipline of mine host's friend, whose skill and success it is no "part of my present purpose to descant upon:—it is sufficient to "mention, that I was irrevocably in his hands long before [his] "most kind note was brought to me, in great haste, by Lord Byron's "servant.

"His Lordship soon followed this note, and I heard his voice in "the next room; but although he waited more than an hour, I "could not see him, being under the inexorable hands of the doctor. "In the course of the same evening he again called, but I was "asleep. When I awoke I found his Lordship's valet sitting by "my bedside. 'He had his master's orders,' he said, 'to remain "with me while I was unwell, and was instructed to say, that "whatever his Lordship had, or could procure, was at my service, "and that he would come to me and sit with me, or do whatever "I liked, if I would only let him know in what way he could be "useful.'

"Accordingly, on the next day, I sent for some book, which was "brought, with a list of his library. I forget what it was which "prevented my seeing Lord Byron on this day, though he called "more than once; and on the next, I was too ill with fever to talk "to any one.

"The moment I could get out, I took a gondola and went to "pay my respects, and to thank his Lordship for his attentions. It "was then nearly three o'clock, but he was not yet up; and when "I went again on the following day at five, I had the mortification "to learn that he had gone, at the same hour, to call upon me, so "that we had crossed each other on the canal; and, to my deep "and lasting regret, I was obliged to leave Venice without seeing "him."

Digitized by Google

know it. There is no comparison between him and any of the other medical people here. I regret very much to hear of your indisposition, and shall do myself the honour of waiting upon you the moment I am up. I write this in bed, and have only just received the letter and note. I beg you to believe that nothing but the extreme lateness of my hours could have prevented me from replying immediately, or coming in person. I have not been called a minute. I have the honour to be,

Very truly your most obedient servant,

BYRON.

## 714.—To James Wedderburn Webster.

Venice, Sept^r 8, 1818.

DEAR WEBSTER,—It is not agreeable to me to hear that you are still in difficulties; but as every one has to go through a certain portion of suffering in this world, the earlier it happens perhaps the better, and in all cases one is better able to battle up in one's youth than in the decline of life. My own worldly affairs have had leisure to improve during my absence abroad. Newstead has been sold, and well sold. I am given to understand my debts are in the prospect of being paid, and I shall have still a large capital from the residue, besides Rochdale, which ought to sell well, and my reversionary prospects which are considerable, in the event of the death of Miss Milbanke's mother. There is (as is usually said) a great advantage in getting the water between a man and his embarrassments, for things with time and a little prudence insensibly re-establish themselves, and I have spent less money, and had more for it, within the two years and a half since my absence from England than I have ever done within the same time before, and my

Digitized by Google

literary speculations allowed me to do it more easily, leaving my own property to liquidate some of the claims till the sale enables me to discharge the whole. Out of England I have no debts whatever.

You ask about Venice; I tell you, as before, that I do not think *you* would like it, at least few English do, and still fewer remain there. Florence and Naples are the Lazarettoes where they carry the infection of their Society; indeed, if there were as many of them in Venice as residents as Lot begged might be permitted to be the salvation of Sodom, it would not be my abode a week longer; for the reverse of the proposition, I should be sure that they would be the damnation of all pleasant or sensible society. I never see any of them when I can avoid it, and when, *occasionally*, they arrive with letters of recommendation, I do what I can for them, if they are sick,—and, if they are well, I return my card for theirs, but little more.

Venice is not an expensive residence (unless a man chooses it). It has theatres, society, and profligacy rather more than enough. I keep four horses on one of the islands, where there is a beach of some miles along the Adriatic, so that I have daily exercise. I have my gondola, and about fourteen servants, including the nurse for a little girl (a natural daughter of mine), and I reside in one of the Mocenigo palaces on the Grand Canal; the rent of the whole house, which is very large and furnished with linen, etc., etc., inclusive, is two hundred a year (and I gave more than I need have done). In the two years I have been at Venice I have spent about *five* thousand pounds, and I need not have spent a *third* of this, had it not been that I have a passion for women which is expensive in its variety every where, but less so in Venice than in other cities. You may suppose that in

Digitized by Google

*two years*, with a large establishment, horses, house, box at the opera, gondola, journeys, women, and Charity (for I have not laid out all upon my pleasures, but have bought occasionally a shilling's worth of salvation), villas in the country, another carriage and horses purchased for the country, books bought, etc., etc.,—in short everything I wanted, and *more* than I ought to have wanted, that the sum of five thousand pounds sterling is no great deal, particularly when I tell you that more than half was laid out in the Sex;—to be sure I have had plenty for the money, that's certain. * * * * * *

If you are disposed to come this way, you might live very comfortably, and even splendidly, for less than a thousand a year, and find a palace for the rent of one hundred, that is to say, an Italian palace; you know that all houses with a particular front are called so—in short an enormous house. But, as I said, I do not think you would like it, or rather that Lady Frances would not; it is not so gay as it has been, and there is a monotony to many people in its Canals and the comparative silence of its streets. To me who have been always passionate for Venice, and delight in the dialect and naïveté of the people, and the romance of its old history and institutions and appearance, all its disadvantages are more than compensated by the sight of a single gondola. The view of the Rialto, of the Piazza, and the Chaunt of Tasso (though less frequent than of old), are to me worth all the cities on earth, save Rome and Athens.

Ever and ever yours,

B.

Digitized by Google

## 715.—To Thomas Moore.

Venice, September 19, 1818.

An English newspaper here would be a prodigy, and an opposition one a monster; and except some extracts *from* extracts in the vile, garbled Paris gazettes, nothing of the kind reaches the Veneto-Lombard public, who are, perhaps, the most oppressed in Europe. My correspondences with England are mostly on business, and chiefly with my attorney, who has no very exalted notion, or extensive conception, of an author's attributes; for he once took up an *Edinburgh Review*, and, looking at it a minute, said to me, "So, I see you have got into the "magazine,"—which is the only sentence I ever heard him utter upon literary matters, or the men thereof.

My first news of your Irish Apotheosis[1] has, consequently, been from yourself. But, as it will not be forgotten in a hurry, either by your friends or your enemies, I hope to have it more in detail from some of the former, and, in the mean time, I wish you joy with all my heart. Such a moment must have been a good deal better than Westminster Abbey,—besides being an assurance of *that* one day (many years hence, I trust), into the bargain.

I am sorry to perceive, however, by the close of your

1. Moore, writing to Mr. Power, June 16, 1818, says, "I was "kept in such a state of bustle while in Dublin, that I had not a "minute to write to you. I suppose you heard all the enthusiasm "my visit excited there—the grand dinner to me—the design of "making it an anniversary—my reception at the theatre, etc., etc. "Nothing certainly was ever like it; and, if I had stayed there a "week longer, it was very confidently said there would be a deputa-"tion to ask me to stand for the city of Dublin. I shall never say "that Paddy is not national again" (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. ii. p. 139). A grand banquet was given in Moore's honour at Morrison's Hotel, Dublin, on June 8, 1818, and his health proposed by Lord Charlemont.



Digitized by Google

letter, that even *you* have not escaped the *surgit amari*, etc., and that your damned deputy has been gathering such "dew from the still *vext* Bermoothes"[1]—or rather *vexatious*. Pray, give me some items of the affair, as you say it is a serious one; and, if it grows more so, you should make a trip over here for a few months, to see how things turn out. I suppose you are a violent admirer of England by your staying so long in it. For my own part, I have passed, between the age of one-and-twenty and thirty, half the intervenient years out of it without regretting any thing, except that I ever returned to it at all, and the gloomy prospect before me of business and parentage obliging me, one day, to return to it again,—at least, for the transaction of affairs, the signing of papers, and inspecting of children.

I have here my natural daughter, by name Allegra,—a pretty little girl enough, and reckoned like papa.[2] Her

1. "Where once
Thou call'dst me up at midnight to fetch dew
From the still vext Bermoothes."

*Tempest*, act i. sc. 2.

Moore (see *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 163, *note* 3) was appointed, in 1803, Registrar to the Admiralty in Bermuda. He visited the islands in the same year, but returned in 1804, leaving a deputy to discharge the duties of the office. The deputy embezzled money, and Moore was liable for claims which were ultimately fixed at 1000 guineas.

2. Allegra was probably at this moment staying with her mother at Este. Jane Clairmont, accompanied by Shelley, came from Lucca to Venice to see her daughter. Venice was reached August 22, and, during the next four months, Shelley's letters contain many references to Byron. "We came," writes Shelley to his wife, August 23, 1818 (*Prose Works of Shelley*, ed. H. Buxton Forman, vol. iv. p. 32), "from Padua hither in a gondola, and the "gondoliere, among other things, without any hint on my part, "began talking of Lord Byron. He said he was a *giovinotto Inglese*, with a *nome stravagante*, who lived very luxuriously, and "spent great sums of money. This man, it seems, was one of Lord "B.'s gondolieri. No sooner had we arrived at the inn, than the "waiter began talking about him—said that he frequented Mrs. "Hoppner's *conversazioni* very much." The day after his arrival

Digitized by Google

mamma is English,—but it is a long story, and—there's an end. She is about twenty months old. * * *

(Sunday, August 23), Shelley "called on Lord Byron; he was "delighted to see me, and our first conversation, of course, con- "sisted in the object of our visit" (*ibid.*, p. 34; see also Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, vol. ii. p. 226, where for "Lord Byron" is given the disputed nickname "Albè," and the purport of the conversation is added). After their talk, Shelley rode with Byron on the Lido—

> "a bare strand
> Of hillocks, heaped from ever-shifting sand,
> Matted with thistles and amphibious weeds,
> Such as from Earth's embrace the salt-ooze breeds."

(See the opening lines of *Julian and Maddalo*). As they rode, "our conversation consisted in histories of his wounded feelings, "and questions as to my affairs, and great professions of friendship "and regard for me. He said that, if he had been in England at "the time of the Chancery affair, he would have moved heaven and "earth to have prevented such a decision. We talked of literary "matters; his fourth canto [of *Childe Harold*], which he says is "very good, and indeed repeated some stanzas of great energy to "me; and 'Foliage,' which he quizzes immoderately" (Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, vol. ii. p. 227). Byron lent the Shelleys his villa at Este, which he rented from Hoppner, and thither, among the Euganean hills, Allegra was sent for some weeks to her mother. There Shelley penned his portrait of Byron in the Preface to *Julian and Maddalo*. There also he wrote his "Lines written among the "Euganean Hills," with their allusion to Byron as—

> "A tempest-cleaving swan
> Of the songs of Albion
> Driven from his ancestral streams."

At the end of September, and again in October, 1818, Shelley saw Byron. Mrs. Shelley, in her Diary for September 30, makes the entry, "Transcribe 'Mazeppa'" (Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, vol. ii. p. 232). Writing to Peacock (October 8), Shelley says, "I saw "Lord Byron, and really hardly knew him again; he is changed "into the liveliest and happiest-looking man I ever met. He read "me the first canto of his *Don Juan*—a thing in the style of *Beppo*, "but infinitely better, and dedicated to Southey, in ten or a dozen "stanzas, more like a mixture of wormwood and verdigrease than "satire" (*Prose Works of Shelley*, vol. iv. p. 39). After October 12, on his third visit to Venice, Shelley saw more of Byron's life. In a letter to Peacock (December 22), he says, "I entirely agree "with what you say about *Childe Harold*. The spirit in which it is "written is, if insane, the most wicked and mischievous insanity "that ever was given forth. It is a kind of obstinate and self-willed "folly, in which he hardens himself. I remonstrated with him in

Digitized by Google

I have finished the first canto (a long one, of about 180 octaves) of a poem in the style and manner of *Beppo*, encouraged by the good success of the same. It is called *Don Juan*,[1] and is meant to be a little quietly facetious upon every thing. But I doubt whether it is not—at least, as far as it has yet gone—too free for these very modest days. However, I shall try the experiment, anonymously; and if it don't take, it will be discontinued. It is dedicated to Southey in good, simple, savage verse, upon the Laureat's politics, and the way he got them. But the bore of copying it out is intolerable; and if I had an amanuensis he would be of no use, as my writing is so difficult to decipher.

"vain on the tone of mind from which such a view of things alone "arises. For its real root is very different from its apparent one. "Nothing can be less sublime than the true source of these expres- "sions of contempt and desperation. The fact is, that first, the "Italian women with whom he associates are perhaps the most con- "temptible of all who exist under the moon—the most ignorant, the "most disgusting, the most bigoted; Countesses smell so strongly of "garlic, that an ordinary Englishman cannot approach them. Well, "L. B. is familiar with the lowest sort of these women, the people "his gondolieri pick up in the streets. He associates with wretches "who seem almost to have lost the gait and physiognomy of man, "and who do not scruple to avow practices, which are not only not "named, but I believe seldom even conceived in England. He "says he disapproves, but he endures. He is heartily and deeply "discontented with himself; and contemplating in the distorted "mirror of his own thoughts the nature and the habits of man, what "can he behold but objects of contempt and despair? But that he "is a great poet, I think the address to Ocean proves. And he has "a certain degree of candour while you talk to him, but unfortu- "nately it does not outlast your departure. No, I do not doubt, "and for his sake, I ought to hope, that his present career must end "soon in some violent circumstance" (*ibid.*, pp. 60, 61).

1. The poem was sent to England under the care of Lord Lauderdale. "Lord Lauderdale," writes Joseph Jekyll to Lady G. Sloane Stanley, December 28, 1818 (*Letters of Joseph Jekyll*, p. 75), "has "brought over a spick-and-span new poem of Lord Byron's from "Venice, sealed up, so the Scottish bearer, no great critic in works "of genius, knows nothing of its merits. But Murray the book- "seller has volunteered a great price for it. He says the poet is "grown fat and cheerful, and comes to England next spring."

Digitized by Google

My poem's Epic, and is meant to be
  Divided in twelve books, each book containing,
With love and war, a heavy gale at sea—
  A list of ships, and captains, and kings reigning—
New characters, etc., etc.

The above are two stanzas, which I send you as a brick of my Babel, and by which you can judge of the texture of the structure.

In writing the *Life* of Sheridan, never mind the angry lies of the humbug Whigs. Recollect that he was an Irishman and a clever fellow, and that *we* have had some very pleasant days with him. Don't forget that he was at school at Harrow, where, in my time, we used to show his name—R. B. Sheridan, 1765,—as an honour to the walls. Remember * * * * * * *. Depend upon it that there were worse folks going, of that gang, than ever Sheridan was.

What did Parr [1] mean by "haughtiness and coldness?"

1. Samuel Parr (1747–1825) was assistant-master at Harrow (1767–71) when Sheridan was there at school, and to consult him, Moore, then at work on his life of Sheridan, visited Bath in August, 1818. "Dr. Parr entered in full wig and apron (which he wears as "Prebendary of St. Paul's, and not unwilling, of course, to look "like a bishop). . . . A powerful old man both in body and mind. "Though it was then morning, he drank two glasses and a half of "wine; and over that, when he was going away, a tumbler of the "Spa" (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. ii. p. 145). Moore goes on to give an account of Parr (*ibid.*, pp. 146–149) and his conversation: "The "doctor was glorious, often very eloquent, always odd." He speaks of the "thickness of his utterance," and his editor, Lord John Russell, adds the following note: "Lord Holland used to say that it was "most unfortunate for a man so full of learning and information as "Dr. Parr, that he could not easily communicate his knowledge; "for when he spoke, nobody could make out what he said, and "when he wrote, nobody could read his handwriting."

As a teacher (1767–98), Parr was a fine scholar, and in some points held modern ideas on education, though he was also a merciless flogger. He gradually gave up teaching as he rose in the Church and became a wealthy man. In his parish he was an active clergyman, friendly to Dissenters, tolerant to Roman Catholics, bitter

Digitized by Google

I listened to him with admiring ignorance, and respectful silence. What more could a talker for fame have?—they don't like to be answered. It was at Payne Knight's I met him, where he gave me more Greek than I could carry away. But I certainly meant to (and *did*) treat him with the most respectful deference.

I wish you a good night, with a Venetian benediction, "*Benedetto te, e la terra che ti farà!*"—"May you be "blessed, and the *earth* which you will *make!*"—is it not pretty? You would think it still prettier if you had heard it, as I did two hours ago, from the lips of a Venetian girl, with large black eyes, a face like Faustina's, and the figure of a Juno—tall and energetic as a Pythoness, with eyes flashing, and her dark hair streaming in the moonlight—one of those women who may be made any thing. I am sure if I put a poniard into the hand of this one, she would plunge it where I told her,—and into *me*, if I offended her. I like this kind of animal, and am sure that I should have preferred Medea to any woman that ever breathed. You may, perhaps, wonder that I don't in that case. * * * I could have forgiven the dagger or the bowl,—any thing, but the deliberate desolation piled upon me, when I stood alone upon my hearth, with my household gods shivered around me.[1]

towards Evangelicals. His Whig principles, friendship for Bentham and Priestley, and views on the French Revolution, excluded him from a bishopric; but his political friends, among whom his thick-set frame, heavy features, bushy eyebrows, full wig, and pipe, were familiar, solaced him by calling him a Whig Johnson. His literary quarrels made a stir in his day, but none of his works have survived. Rough-mannered, pedantic, and pompous, Parr was a learned, genial, kindly-natured, generous man, who made hosts of friends, among them some of the most distinguished persons of the day, and he lives through them rather than through his writings.

1. "I had one only fount of quiet left,
And *that* they poison'd! *My pure household gods*
*Were shiver'd on my hearth.*"
*Marino Faliero*, act iii. sc. 2.

Digitized by Google

* * Do you suppose I have forgotten it? It has comparatively swallowed up in me every other feeling, and I am only a spectator upon earth, till a tenfold opportunity offers. It may come yet. There are others more to be blamed than * * * *, and it is on these that my eyes are fixed unceasingly.

## 716.—To John Murray.

Venice, September 24, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—In the one hundredth and thirty-second stanza of Canto 4th, the stanza runs in the manuscript—

*Left* the unbalanced scale, Great Nemesis!

and *not* "*lost*," which is nonsense, as what losing a scale means, I know not; but *leaving* an unbalanced scale, or a scale unbalanced, is intelligible. Correct this, I pray, —not for the public, or the poetry; but I do not choose to have blunders made in addressing any of the deities, so seriously as this is addressed.

Yours,

B.

P.S.—In the Translation from the Spanish, alter

In increasing Squadrons flew,

to—

To a mighty Squadron grew.

What does "thy waters *wasted* them" mean (in

"Whate'er might be his worthlessness or worth,
Poor fellow! he had many things to wound him,
Let's own—since it can do no good on earth—
It was a trying moment that which found him
Standing alone beside his desolate hearth;
Where all his household gods lay shiver'd round him.
No choice was left his feelings or his pride," etc., etc.
*Don Juan*, Canto I. stanza xxxvi.

Digitized by Google

the Canto)? *That is not me.* Consult the MS. *always.*

I have written the first Canto (180 octave stanzas) of a poem in the style of *Beppo*, and have *Maseppa* to finish besides.

In referring to the mistake made in stanza 132. I take the opportunity to desire that in future, in all parts of my writings relating to religion, you will be more careful, and not forget that it is possible that in addressing the Deity a blunder may become a blasphemy; and I do not choose to suffer such infamous perversions of my words or of my intentions.

I saw the canto by accident.

## 717.—To John Hanson.

Venice, Sept^r 30^th^ 1818.

DEAR SIR,—Many months ago I informed you of my determination not to quit Venice on the present business: that determination is unaltered and unalterable. You have therefore the choice of three things:—1^st^ you can send on a proper person with the papers; 2^dly^ you may come on in person; or 3^dly^ you may return to England, as most assuredly I can not go to Geneva.

If the Sale is impeded, I cannot help it: it is no fault of mine. I told you my intention long ago, and I presume that in any case I shall have either the purchase money or the property again.

You will decide as you please upon the journey, but in no case, in no circumstances, will I for such a purpose be induced to quit my residence, as I before said in the Spring of the present year.

I am, very truly and affectly. yours,

BYRON.

Digitized by Google

P.S.—Your best way will be to *send* a man, with instructions.

## 718.—To John Hanson.

Venice, Oct^r. 6^th. 1818.

DEAR SIR,—I have received the duplicate of your letter, to which I have already answered.

I can only repeat that I apprized you, six months ago, that my leaving Venice was entirely out of the question, and that nothing has occurred since to induce me to change my determination.

The parcel of books, etc., which Mr. Murray will have consigned to your care, you had better send on by a proper person, and I will pay the expence.

On your return to England, your best way will be to send a Clerk with the papers, as he may have less pressing calls on his time and health. The passage by the Simplon may be short, but that of Mont Cenis is open and easy at all periods, as may be ascertained.

For whatever delays may occur (or have occurred) *I* am not to blame. You were apprized already of my residence, and that I would not quit it; and it may suggest itself to you, that, after two years and a half's absence from England, I may have business and connections here which would render it disagreeable for me to quit my family. I should regret any inconvenience or interruptions in the completion of a desirable arrangement; but having long ago expressed my definite objections to quitting home, I have little to reproach myself with, whatever be the consequences. It is not for the journey, which I have made before (and many journeys ten times less easy), but I am settled where I am, and see neither motive nor advantage in putting myself to

Digitized by Google

expences and inconveniences, which are quite superfluous. A Clerk with the papers, and, at any rate, a Courier with the books, will be sufficient without travelling yourself more than you like: as for other matters, you and Mr. Kinnaird have Power of Attorney, and my instructions already

I am, very truly, yours affectly.,

BYRON.

## 719.—To John Hanson.[1]

Venice, October 13th, 1818.

DEAR HANSON,—The season of the year being so advanced, I cannot possibly cross the Simplon now, and

1. John Hanson, his son Newton, and Mr. Townsend who represented Col. Wildman, left England on October 12, and arrived at Dejean's Hotel at Sécheron on the 21st, where they expected to find Byron. Instead of Byron, they found the above letter. They reached the *Grande Bretagne* at Venice on November 12. Fletcher brought a message from Byron that his gondola would arrive at seven that evening, to convey the Hansons to the Mocenigo Palace. Newton Hanson, in his MS. account of the visit, says—

"Fletcher then asked for some packages of books, which his "lordship expected us to bring from Mr. Murray. Mr. Murray "had sent three large packages of books from Albemarle St. to be "conveyed to Venice; but my father would only take one of them. "Unfortunately, the one he selected did not contain a single book, "only a few different-sized kaleidoscopes, tooth-brushes, tooth-"powder, etc., etc. At this Lord Byron was greatly annoyed, and "would not be pacified for some hours.

"At 7 o'clock the gondola came, and we proceeded in it to his "lordship's Hotel. As they do not occupy the basement of the "Hotels in Venice, the basement contained his lordship's carriages, "two or three kinds of dogs, birds, monkeys, a fox, a wolf, in "different cages, and, as his lordship passed to his gondola, he used "to stop and amuse himself with watching their antics, or would "feed them himself occasionally. We proceeded up a flight of "massive marble staircases, through a lofty billiard-room, and then "through a bedroom, to an apartment, to the door of which his "lordship advanced and cordially greeted my father. At their "meeting, I could not help observing a nervous sensitiveness in his "lordship, which produced a silence for some minutes. It was "broken by his lordship observing, 'Well, Hanson! I never

Digitized by Google

am astonished you should have deferred leaving England to so late a period. A letter I received from Hobhouse, as far back as August, stated that, on the part of Col. Wildman, he had heard from his Solicitor the deeds were ready for signature.

Monsieur Dejean, who knows me, will, by mentioning my name, furnish you with four horses and a Postilion,

"thought you would have ventured so far. I rather expected you "would have sent Charles.'

"Lord Byron, as, I suppose, in common with all poets, was "remarkable for evincing, on any sudden emotion of the mind, a "strong burst of deep feeling. On this occasion his eyes were "suffused with tears. My father's object in undertaking the journey "*himself* was to ascertain his lordship's sentiments relative to his "lady, and, in the course of his stay at Venice, took upon himself, "on two or three occasions, to endeavour to promote a reconcilia-"tion. The third day after our arrival, Lord B. received a letter "from Mr. Murray, which contained the news of the melancholy "death of Sir Samuel Romilly. He came down in his gondola to "our hotel to communicate the sad event to my father. The cause "was alleged to be grief at the recent death of Lady Romilly. "Lord B.'s remark was, 'How strange it is that one man will die "for the loss of his partner, while another would die if they were "compelled to live together!' This was said so pointedly that my "father never again referred to the delicate subject of his domestic "affairs. * * * * *

"Lord Byron could not have been more than 30, but he looked "40. His face had become pale, bloated, and sallow. He had "grown very fat, his shoulders broad and round, and the knuckles "of his hands were lost in fat." * * *

On November 17 Byron signed a codicil to his will. After Fletcher had witnessed his signature, he sent him, continues Hanson, "to our hotel to fetch Mr. Townsend, as he wished to "have some conversation with him about Harrow, having learned "from us that he was at that school. We then all retired to the "billiard-room, and remained for two hours, whilst I marked the "game. All the time Lord B. was in the highest spirits, and his "questions about Harrow and the Drurys were incessant, all the time "persistently biting his nails, as was his habit when a boy. * * *

"The next day Fletcher hinted to us that his lordship was "becoming fidgetty for our departure, on which my father and Mr. "Townsend agreed that, matters being settled, they would start for "England the next day. Fletcher returned with his lordship's "gondola in the evening, and conveyed my father and myself to his "lordship's hotel. We then signified our intention of starting the "next morning, which his lordship seemed readily to acquiesce in."

Digitized by Google

and convey you all to Mestri. You will have to leave your carriage, and proceed by gondola from thence to Venice. The Hotel you had better come to in Venice is the *Grande Bretagne*, kept by Signora Boffini. I shall send Fletcher to engage apartments for you.

I am, dear Hanson, your sincere

BYRON.

## 720.—To Lady Byron.[1]

Venice, Nov^r 18^th 1818.

Sir Samuel Romilly[2] has cut his throat for the loss of his wife. It is now nearly three years since he became, in the face of his compact (by a retainer—previous, and, I believe, general), the advocate of the measures and the Approver of the proceedings, which deprived me of mine. I would not exactly, like Mr. Thwackum, when Philosopher Square bit his own tongue—"saddle him with a "Judgement;"[3] but

> "This even-handed Justice
> Commends the ingredients of our poisoned Chalice
> To our own lips."[4]

This Man little thought, when he was lacerating my heart according to law, while he was poisoning my life at it's sources, aiding and abetting in the blighting, branding, and exile that was to be the result of his counsels in their indirect effects, that in less than thirty-six moons —in the pride of his triumph as the highest candidate for the representation of the Sister-City of the mightiest of Capitals—in the fullness of his professional career—

1. Printed from the rough draft in the possession of Mr. Murray.
2. See *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 352, *note* 2.
3. *Tom Jones*, bk. v. chap. 2.
4. *Macbeth*, act i. sc. 7.

Digitized by Google

in the greenness of a healthy old age—in the radiance of fame, and the complacency of self-earned riches—that a domestic affliction would lay him in the earth, with the meanest of malefactors, in a cross-road with the stake in his body, if the verdict of insanity did not redeem his ashes from the sentence of the laws he had lived upon by interpreting or misinterpreting, and died in violating.

This man had eight children, lately deprived of their mother: could he not live? Perhaps, previous to his annihilation, he felt a portion of what he contributed his legal mite to make me feel; but I have lived—lived to see him a Sexagenary Suicide.

It was not in vain that I invoked Nemesis in the midnight of Rome from the awfullest of her ruins.

Fare you well.

B.

## 721.—To D. Kinnaird and J. C. Hobhouse.[1]

Venice, Novr. 18th 1818.

I have had a good deal of Conversation with Mr. Hanson upon this Subject, and, being aware of the extent of the remaining funds after the deduction of the Annuity, and Bond debt, and law expences, do not see any other present prospect of liquidating the Simple Contract debts, and submit to Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. Kinnaird how far this may be eligible.

BYRON.

1. With this letter was sent the following note by Hanson :—
"Respecting the Liquidation of Lord Byron's Simple Contract "Debts, I think, under all the Circumstances, the Creditors may "very fairly be required to accept a Composition in full, and I "recommend it to his Lordship to authorize such a Proposition to "be made to them—at least, so far as an Abatement of one Third "at the least.

"JOHN HANSON."

Digitized by Google

## 722.—To Colonel Wildman.[1]

Venice, November 18, 1818.

MY DEAR WILDMAN,—Mr. Hanson is on the eve of his return, so that I have only time to return a few inadequate thanks for your very kind letter. I should regret to trouble you with any requests of mine in regard to the preservation of any signs of my family which may still exist at Newstead, and leave everything of that kind to your own feelings, present or future, upon the subject. The portrait which you flatter me by desiring, would not be worth to you your trouble and expense of such an exhibition: but you may rely upon your having the very first that may be painted, and which may seem worth your acceptance.

I trust that Newstead will, being yours, remain so! and that it may see you as happy as I am very sure that you will make your dependants. With regard to myself, you may be sure that, whether in the fourth, fifth, or sixth form at Harrow, or in the fluctuations of after-life, I shall always remember, with regard, my old school-fellow, fellow-monitor, and friend; and recognise, with respect, the gallant Soldier, who, with all the advantages of fortune and allurements of youth to a life of pleasure, devoted himself to duties of a nobler order, and will receive his reward in the esteem and admiration of his Country.

Ever yours, most truly and affectionately,

BYRON.

1. This letter is reprinted from Washington Irving's *Miscellanies*, No. II. (1835), p. 137.

Digitized by Google

## 723.—To John Murray.

Venice, November 24th, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Hanson has been here a week and went five days ago;[1] he brought nothing but his papers, some corn-rubbers, and a kaleidoscope. "For what we "have received, the Lord make us thankful!"—for without his aid I shall not be so.

He—Hanson—left everything else in Chancery Lane whatever, except your copy-paper for the last canto, etc., which, being a degree of parchment, he brought with him.

You may imagine his reception; he swore the books were a "waggon-load." If they were, he should have come in a waggon—he would in that case have come quicker than he did.

Lord Lauderdale set off from hence twelve days ago, accompanied by a cargo of poesy[2] directed to Mr. Hobhouse—all spick and span, and in MS. You will see what it is like. I have given it to Master Southey, and he shall have more before I have done with him. I understand the scoundrel said, on his return from Switzerland two years ago, that "Shelley and I were in "a league of Incest, etc., etc." He is a burning liar! for the women to whom he alludes are not sisters—one being

1. Mrs. Leigh writes to Hodgson, December 30, 1818 (*Memoir of Rev. F. Hodgson*, vol. ii. p. 53): "Of our poor dear B. I "have received 2 letters within this last year:—the last dated "Sept^r. This is all I can tell you *from* him, and that he wrote (*as* "*usual to me*) on the old subject very uncomfortably, and on his "present pursuits, which are what one would dread and expect; a "string of low attachments. *Of* him,—I hear he looks *very well*, "but *fat*, immensely large, and his hair long. Mr. Hanson has "lately returned from Venice, having been there to sign and seal "away our dear lamented Abbey."

2. The "cargo of poesy" consisted of *Don Juan*, Canto I., *Mazeppa*, and the *Ode on Venice*.

Digitized by Google

Godwin's daughter, by Mary Wollstonecraft, and the other daughter of the *present* (second) Mrs. G[n], by a *former* husband; and in the next place, if they had even been so, there was no *promiscuous intercourse* whatever.

You may make what I say here as public as you please—more particularly to Southey, whom I look upon, and will say as publicly, to be a dirty, lying rascal; and will prove it in ink—or in his blood, if I did not believe him to be too much of a poet to risk it. If he had forty reviews at his back—as he has the *Quarterly*—I would have at him in his scribbling capacity, now that he has begun with me; but I will do nothing underhand. Tell him what I say from *me*, and everyone else you please.

You will see what I have said if the parcel arrives safe. I understand *Coleridge* went about repeating Southey's lie with pleasure. I can believe it, for I had done him what is called a favour. I can understand Coleridge's abusing me, but how or why *Southey*—whom I had never obliged in any sort of way, or done him the remotest service—should go about fibbing and calumniating is more than I readily comprehend.

Does he think to put me down with his *canting*—not being able to do so with his poetry? We will try the question. I have read his review of Hunt,[1] where he has

1. Leigh Hunt's *Foliage* is reviewed in No. xxxvi. of the *Quarterly Review* (vol. xiv. pp. 324–335). The reviewer finds in Leigh Hunt's work, and "in the compositions of many of those "with whom he has recorded his sympathy and agreement in this "volume," a speculative and practical attempt to revive the system of Epicurus (p. 327). In a note he refers more particularly to Shelley, though not by name. "One of those compositions," he says, "is "now lying before us—the production of a man of some ability, "and possessing itself some beauty; but we are in doubt whether "it would be morally right to lend it notoriety by any comments. "We know the author's disgraceful and flagitious history well, and "could put down some of the vain boasting of his preface. At

Digitized by Google

attacked Shelley in an oblique and shabby manner. Does he know what that review has done? I will tell you. It has *sold* an edition of the *Revolt of Islam*, which, otherwise, nobody would have thought of reading, and few who read can understand—I for one.

Southey would have attacked me, too, there, if he durst, further than by hints about Hunt's friends in general; and some outcry about an "Epicurean system," carried on by men of the most opposite habits, tastes, and opinions in life and poetry (I believe), that ever had their names in the same volume—Moore, Byron, Shelley, Hazlitt, Haydon, Leigh Hunt, Lamb—what resemblance do ye find among all or any of these men? and how could any sort of system or plan be carried on, or attempted amongst them? However, let Mr. Southey look to himself—since the wine is tapped, let him drink it.

I got some books a few weeks ago—many thanks; amongst them is *Israeli's* new edition.[1] It was not fair in

"Eton we remember him notorious for setting fire to old trees with "burning-glasses, no unmeet emblem for a man who perverts his "ingenuity and knowledge to the attacking of all that is ancient "and venerable in our civil and religious institutions" (*ibid.* p. 327). Shelley's *Laon and Cythna*, better known by its subsequent title of *The Revolt of Islam*, was published in 1817–18.

1. Isaac Disraeli's book was *The Literary Character*, the first edition of which was published in 1795. In his preface to the fifth edition, Disraeli says, "A copy accidentally fell into my "hands which had formerly belonged to the great poetical genius of "our times; and the singular fact, that it had been more than once "read by him, and twice in two subsequent years at Athens, in "1810 and 1811, instantly convinced me that the volume deserved "my renewed attention!" The result was the second and enlarged edition, which appeared in 1818. "In the preface to this edition," continues Disraeli, "in mentioning the fact respecting Lord Byron, "which had been the immediate cause of its publication, I added "the words: 'I tell this fact assuredly not from any little vanity "which it may appear to betray;—for the truth is, were I not as "liberal and as candid in respect to my own productions, as I hope "I am to others, I could not have been gratified by the present



Digitized by Google

you to show him my copy of his former one, with all the marginal notes and nonsense made in Greece when I was not two-and-twenty, and which certainly were not meant for his perusal, nor for that of his readers. I have a great respect for *Israeli* and his talents, and have read his works over and over and over repeatedly, and have been amused by them greatly, and instructed often. Besides, I hate giving pain unless provoked; and he is an author, and must feel like his brethren; and although his liberality repaid my marginal flippancies with a compliment—the highest compliment—that don't reconcile me to myself, nor to *you*—it was a breach of confidence to do this without my leave. I don't know a living man's books I take up so often, or lay down more reluctantly, as *Israeli's;* and I never will forgive you—that is, for many weeks. If he had got out of humour I should have been less sorry, but even then, I should have been sorry; but, really, he has heaped his "coals of "fire" so handsomely upon my head, that they burn unquenchably.

You ask me of the two reviews—I will tell you. Scott's is the review of one poet on another—his friend;

"circumstance; for the marginal notes of the noble author convey "no flattery; but amidst their pungency, and sometimes their "truth, the circumstance that a man of genius could reperuse this "slight effusion at two different periods of his life, was a sufficient "authority, at least for an author, to return it once more to the "anvil.'"

On this passage Byron wrote the following note: "I was wrong, "but I was young and petulant, and probably wrote down anything, "little thinking that those observations would be betrayed to the "author, whose abilities I have always respected, and whose works "in general I have read oftener than perhaps those of any English "author whatever, except such as treat of Turkey."

In its new form Byron re-read the work, and again added marginal notes, which were shown to Disraeli, and by him embodied in the edition of 1822. For Byron's notes, see chapter vi. (ed. 1862, p. 56); chapter vii. *ad fin.* (*ibid.*, p. 88); chapter viii. (*ibid.*, p. 96).

Digitized by Google

and Wilson's the review of a poet, too, on another—his *idol;* for he likes me better than he chooses to avow to the public, with all his eulogy. I speak, judging only from the article, for I don't know him personally.

So Sir Samuel Romilly has cut his throat for the loss of his wife. Three years ago (nearly), when, after a long and general retainer, he deserted to Miss Milbanke, and did his best, or his worst, to destroy me, or make me destroy myself, did he dream that in less than thirty-six months a domestic deprivation would level him in a cross-road, but for a lying verdict of lunacy?

There would have been some excuse for such a fit at twenty-seven—but at sixty-four! Could not the dotard wait till his drivelling did it? You see that Nemesis is not yet extinct, for I had not forgot Sir S. in my imprecation, which involved many. I never will dissemble—it may be very fine to forgive—but I would not have forgiven him living, and I will not affect to pity him dead. There are others of that set (of course I except the women, who were mere instruments—all but one) who have throats; but whether they will be cut by their own hands, or no, is yet to be shown. There is much to be done; and you may yet see that what ought to be done upon those my enemies will be.

Here is a long letter—can you read it?

Yours ever,

BYRON.

## 724.—To John Murray.

Venice, January 20, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I write two lines to say that, if you publish *Don Juan*,[1] I will only have the stanzas on

1. Byron's friends, who were consulted as to the publication of *Don*

Digitized by Google

Castlereagh *omitted*—and the two concluding words (Bob Bob) of the two last lines of the third Stanza of the dedication to S. I explained to Hobhouse why I have attacked that Scoundrel and request him to explain to you the reason.

The opinions which I have asked of Mr. H. and others were with regard to the poetical merit, and not as to what they may think due to the *Cant* of the day, which still reads the *Bath Guide*,[1] *Little's poems*, Prior and Chaucer, to say nothing of Fielding and Smollett. If published, publish entire, with the above mentioned exceptions; or you may publish anonymously, or *not* at *all:* in the latter event, print 50 on my account, for private distribution.

Yours ever,

B.

I have written by this post to Messrs. K. and H.

*Juan*, were Hobhouse, Kinnaird, Scrope Davies, Moore, and Frere. They were unanimous in advising the suppression of the poem on such grounds as the following: (1) the inexpediency of renewing his domestic troubles by sarcasms on his wife; (2) the indecency of parts; (3) the attacks on religion; (4) the abuse of other writers of the day; (5) the confirmation of all stories about his Venetian life, which would be given by the rakishness of the poem. Byron's letter to Murray was written before receiving Hobhouse's advice. His second letter, January 25, was the result of his friends' counsel, though in the end he decided on publication.

Mrs. Leigh gives her opinion on the poem in a letter to Hodgson, dated April 17, 1819: "I have nothing to say of foreign news. I "assure you I am very low about him. This new Poem, if per- "sisted in, will be the ruin of him, from what I can learn. Indeed, "if *his Friends*—those he terms such—allow it, one may believe it. "But if you write, say nothing, for it would not do good, I believe, "without you were on the spot: And I was charged not to write of "it, as the more opposition and disapprobation manifested, the "more obstinate he will be."

*Don Juan* (Cantos I., II.) was published, July 15, 1819, without the name of author or publisher, and only with that of Thomas Davison, Printer, Whitefriars, London.

1. Christopher Anstey's *New Bath Guide, or Memoirs of the B—r—d Family, in a Series of Poetical Epistles*, appeared in 1766.

Digitized by Google

to desire that they will not erase more than I have stated.

The second Canto of *Don Juan* is finished in 206 stanzas.

## 725.—To John Murray.

Venice, January 25, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—You will do me the favour to print privately (for private distribution) fifty copies of *Don Juan*. The list of the men to whom I wish it to be presented, I will send hereafter. The other two poems had best be added to the collective edition: I do not approve of *their* being published separately. *Print Don Juan entire*, omitting, of course, the lines on Castlereagh, as I am not on the spot to meet him. I have a second Canto ready, which will be sent by and bye. By this post, I have written to Mr. Hobhouse, addressed to your care.

Yours ever truly,

B.

P.S.—I have acquiesced in the request and representation; and having done so, it is idle to detail my arguments in favour of my own Self-love and "Poeshie;" but I *protest*. If the poem has poetry, it would stand; if not, fall: the rest is "leather and prunella," [1] and has never yet affected any human production "pro or con." Dullness is the only annihilator in such cases. As to the Cant of the day, I despise it, as I have ever done all its other finical fashions, which become you as paint became the Antient Britons. If you admit this prudery, you must omit half Ariosto, La Fontaine, Shakespeare,

1. "Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
The rest is all but leather or prunella."
Pope, *Essay on Man*, iv. 203, 204.

Digitized by Google

Beaumont, Fletcher, Massinger, Ford, all the Charles Second writers; in short, *something* of most who have written before Pope and are worth reading, and much of Pope himself. *Read him*—most of you *don't*—but *do*—and I will forgive you; though the inevitable consequence would be that you would burn all I have ever written, and all your other wretched Claudians of the day (except Scott and Crabbe) into the bargain. I wrong Claudian, who *was* a *poet*, by naming him with such fellows; but he was the *ultimus Romanorum*,[1] the tail of the Comet, and these persons are the tail of an old Gown cut into a waistcoat for Jackey; but being both *tails*, I have compared one with the other, though very unlike, like all Similies. I write in a passion and a Sirocco, and I was up till six this morning at the Carnival; but I *protest*, as I did in my former letter.

## 726.—To John Murray.

Venice, February 1, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—After one of the concluding stanzas of the first Canto of *Don Juan*, which ends with (I forget the number)—

To have . . . . . .
. . . . . when the original is dust,
A book, a damned bad picture, and worse bust,

insert the following stanza—

What are the hopes of man? Old Egypt's King
Cheops erected the first Pyramid
And largest, thinking it was just the thing
To keep his Memory whole, and Mummy hid,

1. See Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, vol. iv. ch. xxx. p. 63-66 (ed. 1862).

Digitized by Google

But Somebody or Other rummaging
Burglariously broke his Coffin's lid,
Let not a Monument give you or me hopes,
Since not a pinch of dust is left of Cheops![1]

I have written to you several letters, some with additions, and some upon the subject of the poem itself, which my cursed puritanical committee have protested against publishing; but we will circumvent them on that point in the end. I have not yet begun to copy out the second Canto, which is finished, from natural laziness, and the discouragement of the milk and water they have thrown upon the first. I say all this to them as to you; that is, for *you* to say to *them*, for I will have nothing underhand. If they had told me the poetry was bad, I would have acquiesced; but they say the contrary, and then talk to me about morality—the first time I ever heard the word from any body who was not a rascal that used it for a purpose. I maintain that it is the most moral of poems; but if people won't discover the moral, that is their fault, not mine. I have already written to beg that in any case you will print *fifty* for private distribution. I will send you the list of persons to whom it is to be sent afterwards.

Within this last fortnight I have been rather indisposed with a rebellion of Stomach, which would retain nothing, (liver, I suppose,) and an inability, or phantasy, not to be able to eat of any thing with relish but a kind of Adriatic fish called *Scampi*, which happens to be the most indigestible of marine viands. However, within these last two days, I am better, and

Very truly yours,

BYRON.

1. *Don Juan*, Canto I. stanza ccxix.

Digitized by Google

## 727.—To John Murray.

Venice, Feb. 22nd, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—Within these last two months, or rather three, I have sent by letter, at different times, several additions to "*Don Juan*" to be inserted in the places specified. Have any or aught or none of these been received? I write in haste; it is the last day but one of the Carnival, and I have not been in bed till seven or eight in the morning for these ten days past. It is very probable that I shall decide on the publication of *Don Juan*. The Second Canto I have not yet begun to copy; but the first might proceed without.

Yours,

B.

I *have written several times*. There was also a note[1] in answer to Hazlitt—to be placed with *Mazeppa*.

## 728.—To John Hanson.

March 9th 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote by last post to Mr. K. on the subject of the money to be advanced on account, desiring it to be so; but I am equally surprized with him, that there should be any difficulty in presenting the *bill*, which surely might have been ready by this time. However, I shall keep *my word*, and have written accordingly.

I have no fault to find with any of the proceedings but *one:* you know my *horror* and *dread* of the *funds*—

1. The note, in answer to the charge of inconsistency made against Byron by Hazlitt, in his "eighth and concluding lecture" on "the "canons of criticism, delivered at the Surrey Institute," is printed as *note* 15 to *Don Juan* (*Works*, pp. 590, 591).

*Mazeppa* and "The Ode on Venice" were published in 1819.

Digitized by Google

the most unstable of all properties. I do beg and pray, request and require, that the settled property be invested in some other way—on land or mortgage, even at a discount, rather than continue my property on such precarious security, which I look upon in fact to be none at all. This being the case, I earnestly hope that you will lose no time in representing to the trustees my opinion upon the subject and taking measures accordingly.

Could not the sum be settled on some of Sir Ralph N.'s estates? If he wants money, and the interest can be secured, it would be an accommodation to both. I shall never rest while I think that my income depends on the English funds, and my property on that of a nation without any.

I pray you keep this in mind, and let me hear from you soon.

Yours ever,

BYRON.

## 729.—To John Murray.

Venice, April 3, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—You have had the second Canto of *Don Juan* which you will publish with the first, if it please you. But there shall be *no mutilations* in either, *nor omissions*, except such as I have already indicated in letters to which I have had no answer. I care nothing for what may be said, or thought, or written, on the Subject. If the poem is, or appears, dull, it will fail; if not, it will succeed. I have already written my opinion in former letters, and see no use of repetition. There are some words in the Address to the Scoundrel Southey which I requested Mr. H. to omit, and some stanzas about Castlereagh, which cannot decently appear as I

Digitized by Google

am at too great a distance to answer the latter, if he wished it, personally; the former is as great a coward as he is a Renegade, and distance can make no odds in speaking of him—as he dare do nothing but scribble even to his next neighbour; but the other villain is at least a brave one, and I would not take advantage of the Alps and the Ocean to assail him when he could not revenge himself. As for the rest I will never flatter *Cant*, but, if you choose, I will publish a preface saying that you are all hostile to the publication. You may publish anonymously, or not, as you think best for any reasons of your own. Never mind me.

Yours,

B.

You have never answered my letter asking if you had received the additions to Canto 1st "Julia's letter," etc., etc.

## 730.—To John Murray.[1]

Venice, April 6, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—The Second Canto of *Don Juan* was sent, on Saturday last, by post, in 4 packets, two of 4,

1. The above letter was written in answer to the following letter from Murray:—

"Albemarle Street, March 19, 1819.

"MY LORD,—I am very much afraid that you will be sadly out "of humour with all your advising friends here. Mr. Hobhouse, "Mr. Kinnaird, and I have consulted, and unite in entreaties that "you will let us publish one magnificent Canto of *Don Juan*, about "which the greatest expectations prevail, and which I long to "realize. Further it is decreed that Hazlitt's should not be asso- "ciated with your Lordship's name, and, if the note upon him be "printed, perhaps you will call him 'a certain lecturer.'

"I shall have compleated this month a most beautiful edition of "your works and the appearance at this time of a popular original "work from you would render me the greatest possible service, and,

Digitized by Google

and two of three sheets each, containing in all two hundred and seventeen stanzas, octave measure. But I will permit no curtailments, except those mentioned about Castlereagh and the two *Bobs* in the Introduction. You sha'n't make *Canticles* of my Cantos. The poem will please, if it is lively; if it is stupid, it will fail; but I will have none of your damned cutting and slashing. If you please, you may publish *anonymously;* it will perhaps be better; but I will battle my way against them all, like a Porcupine.

So you and Mr. Foscolo,[1] etc., want me to undertake

"as I say, every one is expecting and asking for something from "you. Here is Foscolo at my side, deploring that a man of your "genius will not occupy some six or eight years in the composition "of a work and subject worthy of you, and this you have promised "to Gifford long ago, and to Hobhouse and Kinnaird since. "Believe me, there is no Character talked of in this Country as "yours is; it is the constant theme of all classes, and your portrait "is engraved, and painted, and sold in every town throughout the "Kingdom. I wish you would suffer yourself to be fully aware of "this high estimation of your Countrymen, and not to run even a "slight or doubtful chance of injuring what is to be the noblest "inheritance of a descendant who promises to be so attractive. "Let me have the Second Canto of *Don Juan*, and suffer Gifford, "who never swerves in his admiration of your talents, to prepare "what he thinks worthy of you. This I will instantly set up in "proof, and send out for your final alteration and completion, and "there will yet be time to bring it out in May.

"Mr. Hobhouse promises to write by this night's Post.

"With the sincerest attachment, I remain, My Lord,

"Your grateful and faithful servant,

"JNO. MURRAY."

1. Ugo, originally Niccolo, Foscolo (1778–1827), a native of Zante, patriot, poet, dramatist, and critic, vented his disappointment when Venice fell to Austria by the Treaty of Campo Formio, in the *Lettere di Jacopo Ortis* (1798). He had previously (1797) produced a tragedy, *Tieste*. He served as a volunteer in the Lombard Legion in 1799, and, after the capitulation of Genoa, retired to Milan, where he published *Sepolcri* (1807). In 1809, as Professor of Eloquence at Padua, he delivered his famous lecture, *Dell' origine e dell' Ufficio della Letteratura*, for which Napoleon deprived him of his chair. At Florence he composed his two tragedies, *Ricciarda* and *Ajace*, translated the *Sentimental Journey*, and wrote his *Hymns to the Graces*. Returning to Milan in 1813, he settled, after

Digitized by Google

what you call a "great work?" an Epic poem, I suppose, or some such pyramid. I'll try no such thing; I hate tasks. And then "seven or eight years!" God send us all well this day three months, let alone years. If one's years can't be better employed than in sweating poesy, a man had better be a ditcher. And works, too!—is *Childe Harold* nothing? You have so many "*divine*" poems, is it nothing to have written a *Human* one? without any of your worn-out machinery. Why, man, I could have spun the thoughts of the four cantos of that poem into twenty, had I wanted to book-make, and its passion into as many modern tragedies. Since you want *length*, you shall have enough of *Juan*, for I'll make 50 cantos.

And Foscolo, too! Why does *he* not do something more than the *Letters of Ortis*, and a tragedy, and pamphlets? He has good fifteen years more at his command than I have: what has he done all that time?—proved his Genius, doubtless, but not fixed its fame, nor done his utmost.

Besides, I mean to write my best work in *Italian*, and it will take me nine years more thoroughly to master the language; and then if my fancy exist, and I exist too, I will try what I *can* do *really*. As to the Estimation of the English which you talk of, let them calculate

a brief sojourn in Switzerland, in London in 1816. There he published Essays on Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Dante, and contributed many articles to the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews*. He died in September, 1827, of dropsy, in poverty and neglect, the result of his own extravagance and irregularities. He was buried at Chiswick. There his tomb was visited by Garibaldi, and thence (1871) his remains were removed to Florence, and interred in the Santa Croce by the side of Machiavelli, Galileo, Michael Angelo, and Alfieri. He was an Italian Landor, living in the present, rather than in the past (Garnett's *Italian Literature*, pp. 337-341); but it is as an ardent patriot, rather than an eminent writer, that his memory is most cherished by his countrymen.

Digitized by Google

what it is worth, before they insult me with their insolent condescension.

I have not written for their pleasure. If they are pleased, it is that they chose to be so; I have never flattered their opinions, nor their pride; nor will I. Neither will I make "Ladies books" *al dilettar le femine e la plebe.* I have written from the fullness of my mind, from passion, from impulse, from many motives, but not for their "sweet voices."[1]

I know the precise worth of popular applause, for few Scribblers have had more of it; and if I chose to swerve into their paths, I could retain it, or resume it, or increase it. But I neither love ye, nor fear ye; and though I buy with ye and sell with ye, and talk with ye, I will neither eat with ye, drink with ye, nor pray with ye.[2] They made me, without my search, a species of popular Idol; they, without reason or judgement, beyond the caprice of their good pleasure, threw down the Image from its pedestal; it was not broken with the fall, and they would, it seems, again replace it—but they shall not.

You ask about my health: about the beginning of the year I was in a state of great exhaustion, attended by such debility of Stomach that nothing remained upon it; and I was obliged to reform my "way of life," which was conducting me from the "yellow leaf" to the Ground, with all deliberate speed. I am better in health and morals, and very much yours ever,

B^N^

P.S.—Tell Mrs. Leigh I have never had "my Sashes,"

1. *Coriolanus*, act ii. sc. 3.
2. "*Shylock.* I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, "walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, "drink with you, nor pray with you" (*Merchant of Venice*, act i. sc. 3).

Digitized by Google

and I want some tooth-powder, the red, by all or any means.

## 731.—To the Editor of *Galignani's Messenger*.[1]

Venice, April 27th 1819.

SIR,—In various numbers of your Journal, I have seen mentioned a work entitled "*The Vampire*," with the

1. *The Vampyre* (London, 1819, 8vo) is prefaced by an "Extract "of a letter from Geneva," and, after the story, is printed "An "Account of Lord Byron's Residence in the Island of Mitylene" in 1812. Murray, writing to Byron, April 27, 1819, said—

"Amongst an assortment of new books which I forwarded to you "through the kindness of Mr. Hamilton of the Foreign Office, was "a copy of a thing called *The Vampire*, which Mr. Colburn has had "the temerity to publish with your name as its author. It was first "printed in the *New Monthly Magazine*, from which I have taken "the copy wch I now enclose. The Editor of that Journal has "quarrelled with the publisher, and has called this morning to "exculpate himself from the baseness of the transaction. He says "that he received it from Dr. Polidori for a small sum, Polidori "averring that the whole plan of it was yours, and that it was merely "written out by him. The Editor inserted it with a short statement "to this effect; but to his astonishment Colburn cancelled the leaf "on the day previous to its publication, and contrary to, and in "direct hostility to his positive order, fearing that this statement "would prevent the sale of this work in a separate form, which was "subsequently done. He informs me that Polidori, finding that the "sale exceeded his expectation, and that he had sold it too cheap, "went to the Editor and declared that he would deny it. He wrote "to Perry to say that it was not written by you, and the next day "told him to suppress the Letter. He is now preparing a sort of "Boswell diary of your Life. I have now before me a long letter "from the said Editor, which I shall inclose to Mr. Hobhouse, who "will probably see the said Doctor and then forward the Letter to you.

"I am glad to find that you are well. Your Stomach may be "weak, but, upon my soul, the Intellects are in full vigour, for I "never read a more powerful Letter in my life than the last with "which you favoured me."

In a subsequent letter (April 29, 1819) Murray writes, "Mr. "Hobhouse tells me that he has written to you fully, and he has "taken Polidori in hand with equal propriety and judgement."

The result of Hobhouse's intervention probably was the following letter from Polidori, which appeared in the *Courier* (May 5, 1819), addressed to the editor of the *New Monthly Magazine*:—

"SIR,—As the person referred to in the letter from Geneva prefixed "to the Tale of '*The Vampyre*,' in your last number, I beg leave

Digitized by Google

addition of my name as that of the Author. I am not the author, and never heard of the work in question until now. In a more recent paper I perceive a formal annunciation of "*The Vampire*," with the addition of an

"to state, that your correspondent has been mistaken in attributing "that tale, in its present form, to Lord Byron. The fact is, that "though the ground-work is certainly Lord Byron's, its develop- "ment is mine, produced at the request of a lady, who denied the "possibility of any thing being drawn from the materials which Lord "Byron had said he intended to have employed in the formation of "his Ghost Story.

"I am, etc.,
"J. W. POLIDORI."

For Byron's tale, see the fragment printed in the *Letters*, vol. iii. pp. 446–453, as Appendix IX. Polidori's account of his own conduct is puzzling. In his Introduction to his *Ernestus Berchtold, or the Modern Œdipus* (1819), he thus defends his action—

"The tale here presented to the public is the one I began at "Coligny, when *Frankenstein* was planned, and when a noble "author, having determined to descend from his lofty range, gave "up a few hours to a tale of terror, and wrote the fragment pub- "lished at the end of *Maseppa*."

To this passage Polidori adds the following note:—

"The tale which lately appeared, and to which his lordship's "name was wrongfully attached, was founded upon the ground- "work upon which this fragment was to have been continued. Two "friends were to travel from England into Greece; while there, "one of them should die, but before his death, should obtain from "his friend an oath of secrecy with regard to his decease. Some "short time after, the remaining traveller, returning to his native "country, should be startled at perceiving his former companion "moving about in society, and should be horrified at finding that "he made love to his former friend's sister. Upon this foundation "I built the *Vampyre*, at the request of a lady, who denied the "possibility of such ground-work forming the outline of a tale which "should bear the slightest appearance of probability. In the course "of three mornings I produced that tale, and left it with her. "From hence it appears to have fallen into the hands of some "person, who sent it to the Editor in such a way as to leave it so "doubtful from his words, whether it was his lordship's or not, "that I found some difficulty in vindicating it to myself. These "circumstances were stated in a letter sent to the *Morning Chronicle* "three days after the publication of the tale, but in consequence of "the publishers representing to me that they were compromised "as well as myself, and that immediately they were certain it was "mine, that they themselves would wish to make the *amende* "*honorable* to the public, I allowed them to recall the letter which "had lain some days at that paper's office."

Digitized by Google

account of my "residence in the Island of Mitylene," an Island which I have occasionally sailed by in the course of travelling, some years ago, through the Levant—and where I should have no objection to reside, but where I have never yet resided. Neither of these performances are mine, and I presume that it is neither unjust nor ungracious to request that you will favour me by contradicting the advertisement to which I allude. If the book is clever, it would be base to deprive the real writer, whoever he may be, of his honours; and if stupid, I desire the responsibility of nobody's dullness but my own. You will excuse the trouble I give you; the imputation is of no great importance, and as long as it was confined to surmises and reports, I should have received it, as I have received many others, in Silence. But the formality of a public advertisement of a book I never wrote, and a residence where I never resided, is a little too much; particularly as I have no notion of the contents of one, nor the incidents of the other. I have besides a personal dislike to "Vampires," and the little acquaintance I have with them would by no means induce me to divulge their secrets. You did me a much less injury by your paragraphs about "my devotion" and "abandonment of "society for the sake of religion," which appeared in your Messenger during last Lent, all of which are not founded on fact; but you see I do not contradict them, because they are merely personal, whereas the others in some degree concern the reader. You will oblige me by complying with my request of contradiction.—I assure you that I know nothing of the work or works in question, and have the honour to be (as the Correspondents to Magazines say) "your constant reader," and very obed$^{t}$ humble serv$^{t}$,

BYRON.

Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### MAY—DECEMBER, 1819.

COUNTESS GUICCIOLI;[1] VENICE; BOLOGNA; RAVENNA; BOLOGNA; LA MIRA—*DON JUAN*, CANTO III.

### 732.—To John Murray.

Venice, May 6th 1819.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 17th and 20th are arrived. I recopy the "Julia's letter," as the former copy, sent in

1. Teresa, daughter of Count Ruggiero Gamba of Ravenna, born *circa* 1800, died March, 1873, married in 1818, as his third wife, Count Guiccioli, reputed to be one of the richest landowners in the Romagna. Count Guiccioli is thus described by a police spy, in a report dated September 10, 1819: "Il più ricco possidente della "Romagna, uomo cupo, intrigante, fierissimo, generoso, che si "credè colpevole dell' assassinio del Manzoni" (Emilio del Cerro, *Misteri di Polisia*, p. 136). The bride, according to Byron (Letter to John Murray, June 29, 1819), was only twenty years old (see also Hobhouse, *Westminster Review*, January, 1825, p. 22). Elze (*Life of Lord Byron*, p. 229) says that her marriage took place "before she was sixteen," probably on the authority of Byron's inscription in her copy of *Corinne*, August 25, 1819, where he speaks of her as "seventeen years of age." Her husband was in his sixtieth year.

The Countess Guiccioli met Byron for the first time at the house of the Countess Albrizzi, in the autumn of 1818, three days after her marriage. They were not introduced to each other till April, 1819, when they met at a party given by the Countess Benzoni. The countess describes, in a manuscript quoted by Moore (*Life*, p. 393), the commencement of the acquaintance: "Nell' Aprile del 1819, "io feci la conoscenza di Lord Byron; e mi fu presentato a Venezia "dalla Contessa Benzoni nalla di lei società. Questa presentazione "che ebbe tante consequenze per tutti i due fu fatta contro la "volontà d'entrambi, e solo per condiscendenza l'abbiamo permesa.



Digitized by Google

Winter, seems to have miscarried, by your account. Let me hear of the arrival of the enclosed. There are also

"Io stanca più che mai quella sera par le ore tarde che si costuma "fare in Venezia andai con molta ripugnanza e solo per ubbidire al "Conte Guiccioli in quella Società. Lord Byron che scanzava di "fare nuove conoscenze, dicendo sempre che aveva interamente "rinunciato alle passioni e che non voleva esporsi più alle loro "consequenze, quando la Contessa Benzoni lo pregò di volersi far "presentare a me, egli recusò, e solo per la compiàcenza glielo "permise. La nobile e bellissima sua fisonomia, il suono della sua "voce, le sue maniere, i mille incanti che lo circondavano lo rende- "vano un essere così differente, così superiore a tutti quelli che "io aveva sino allora veduti che non potei a meno di non provarne "la più profonda impressione. Da quella sera in poi in tutti i giorni "che mi fermai in Venezia ci siamo sempre veduti." Moore (*ibid.*) thus translates the passage: "I became acquainted with Lord Byron "in the April of 1819; he was introduced to me at Venice, by the "Countess Benzoni, at one of that lady's parties. This introduction, "which had so much influence over the lives of us both, took place "contrary to our wishes, and had been permitted by us only from "courtesy. For myself, more fatigued than usual that evening on "account of the late hours they keep at Venice, I went with great "repugnance to this party, and purely in obedience to Count "Guiccioli. Lord Byron, too, who was averse to forming new "acquaintances,—alleging that he had entirely renounced all attach- "ments, and was unwilling any more to expose himself to their "consequences,—on being requested by the Countess Benzoni to "allow himself to be presented to me, refused, and, at last, only "assented from a desire to oblige her. His noble and exquisitely "beautiful countenance, the tone of his voice, his manners, the "thousand enchantments that surrounded him, rendered him so "different and so superior a being to any whom I had hitherto seen, "that it was impossible he should not have left the most profound "impression upon me. From that evening, during the whole of my "subsequent stay at Venice, we met every day."

Before Count Guiccioli and his wife left Venice for Ravenna at the end of the month, Byron and the countess had become intimate. On June 2, 1819, Byron, hearing of her illness, set out for Ravenna to join her. When, in August, the Guiccioli left Ravenna for Bologna, Byron followed them. There, according to the police spy, he hired the Palazzo Merendoni for a year, and, while furnishing it, lived at the Hotel Pellegrino (*Misteri di Polisia*, p. 135). At Bologna Count Guiccioli, after asking Byron to use his influence to secure him a Vice-Consulate at Ravenna (*Croker Papers*, vol. i. pp. 144, 145), left his wife and Byron, who shortly afterwards left Bologna together. "Lord Byron," says the spy (*Misteri di Polisia*, p. 139), "partì "improvvisamente con Madama Guiccioli, che perciò si disse o "da lui portata via o vendutagli (*sic*) dal marito." They travelled to Venice, and thence to Byron's villa at La Mira. There Moore

Digitized by Google

*three other* stanzas for insertion in Canto first, in the earlier part referring to the character of Donna Inez.

met her. In his Diary for October 7, 1819 (*Journal, etc.*, vol. iii. p. 25), he notes that "Byron introduced me to his Countess before "we left La Mira; she is a blonde and young; married only about "a year, but not very pretty." A second impression, October 11, 1819 (*ibid.*, p. 29), was more favourable: "Saw the Countess again, "who looked prettier than she did the first time. Guiccioli is her "name, *nata Gamba*." During their stay at La Mira, Byron received, through the Countess, a request from Count Guiccioli for a loan of £1000. He refused. Later in the autumn the Count demanded that his wife should give up Byron, and return to him. Byron used his influence to persuade her to accept the conditions; the Guiccioli returned to Ravenna, and Byron prepared to leave Venice for England. Once again, at the close of 1819, the Countess fell ill; her father implored Byron to come to her; her husband acquiesced, and in December, 1819, Byron was formally accepted by her relations as her "Cicisbeo," and appeared in the part at the house of her uncle, the Marquis Cavalli. In January he was installed in rooms at the Palazzo Guiccioli, which he rented from the Count. A second crisis in their relations occurred in June, 1820, when the Count again demanded that his wife should give up Byron. His house had become a hotbed of revolution, and he may have been alarmed at the possible consequences to himself. This time the Countess insisted on a separation, which was decreed by the Pope in July, 1820. She retired on an allowance of £200 a year to her father's house, where Byron, still renting his rooms in the Palazzo Guiccioli, continued to visit her. When the Gambas, in 1821, with the Countess, left Papal territory, Byron joined her at Pisa, and, later, till his departure for Greece, lived with her near Genoa.

Byron's letters to his sister and to Hoppner leave it uncertain whether he was deeply attached to the Countess. Hoppner (*Athenæum*, May 22, 1869, p. 702) says that, in June, 1818, it had "de-"pended on the toss-up of a halfpenny whether he should follow her "to Ravenna or return to England." It was almost equally uncertain whether, in December of the same year, he would not refuse to rejoin her. But his withdrawal of her from her husband's protection had outraged Venetian decorum, and, after her separation from the Count, his tie to her was strengthened. It is, however, certain that his connection with her raised him from the mud in which he had plunged at Venice. Shelley's statement is explicit: "L. B. is "greatly improved in every respect. In genius, in temper, in moral "views, in health, in happiness. The connexion with La Guiccioli "has been an inestimable benefit to him" (*Prose Works*, ed. H. Buxton Forman, Letter to Mary Shelley, August 10, 1821, vol. iv. p. 217).

The Countess was disinterested in her attachment to Byron. Shelley speaks of her in October, 1821 (*Prose Works of Shelley*, ed. H. B. Forman, vol. iv. p. 243), as "a very pretty, sentimental,

Digitized by Google

You seem in a fright; remember, you need not publish, if you don't like it.

"innocent Italian, who has sacrificed an immense fortune for the "sake of Lord Byron, and who, if I know anything of my friend, "of her, and of human nature, will hereafter have plenty of oppor- "tunity to repent her rashness." She gave up wealth and position for him; she declined to receive money from him when he left Italy for Greece (Barry's letter to Moore, quoted in *Life*, p. 419); she refused to allow him to provide for her by his will (Lady Blessington's *Conversations*, p. 91). "Her conduct towards me," said Byron to Lady Blessington (*ibid.*, p. 117), "has been faultless, and there are "few examples of such complete and disinterested affection as she "has shown towards me all through our attachment." She was his equal in birth,—"well educated, remarkably fond of, and well read "in, the poetry of her own country, and a tolerable proficient in "that of France and England" (*ibid.*, p. 69). She was also a woman of great personal attractions. Mary Shelley (Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, vol. ii. p. 446) writes of her as "a nice, pretty girl, "without pretensions, good-hearted, and amiable." Other descriptions of her will be found in Leigh Hunt's *Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries* (vol. i. pp. 66–69); in Medwin's *Conversations of Lord Byron* (pp. 22–34), with characteristic inaccuracies as to the colour of her hair and eyes; in Lady Blessington's *Idler in Italy* (vol. ii. p. 137); in Lord Malmesbury's *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister* (vol. i. p. 26) in 1829; and elsewhere. Lady Blessington says of her in 1828—

"Her appearance is highly prepossessing, her manners remark- "ably distinguished, and her conversation *spirituelle* and interesting. "Her face is decidedly handsome, the features regular and well- "proportioned, her complexion delicately fair, her teeth very fine, "and her hair of that rich golden tint which is peculiar to the female "pictures by Titian and Georgioni (*sic*). Her countenance is very "pleasing: its general character is pensive; but it can be lit up "with animation and gaiety, when its expression is very agreeable. "Her bust and arms are exquisitely beautiful, and her whole "appearance reminds one very strikingly of the best portraits in the "Venetian school. La Contessa Guiccioli is well educated and "highly accomplished; she speaks her native language with "remarkable purity, French with great fluency, and understands "English perfectly. Her reading has been extensive, her memory "is retentive, and her imagination has been elevated by the study "of the best poets of her own country and ours. With so many "qualifications for society, it is not to be wondered at that her "presence is much sought, and that those who know her feel a "lively interest in her favour."

Lord Malmesbury, who met her at Rome in 1829, says—

"One night I was at a ball given by the Austrian Ambassador, "and was much struck by a lady quite unlike the Italian women "who were there, as she had a profusion of auburn hair, which

Digitized by Google

I am sorry my letter seemed "cynical." It was not meant so to *you* personally; as to my *general opinions*, they are the same.

"she wore in wavy and massive curls. Her face was hand-
"some, with a brilliant complexion and blue eyes, and full of
"animation, showing splendid teeth when she laughed, which she
"was doing heartily at the time I remarked her. When she rose
"from her chair I saw she was of small stature, although with
"perfect shoulders, and a bust made for a much taller woman. . . .
"I was told that this was the Countess Guiccioli, of Byronic memory,
"and that she was very fond of the English, and courted their
"acquaintance; so I was introduced to her, and was very kindly re-
"ceived. . . . We became great friends, and I found her a charming
"companion, with a cultivated mind, yet with all the natural
"*bonhomie* of her race, and fond of fun."

The Countess Guiccioli came to England in 1832-3 with her brother, Pietro Gamba. On this occasion, or on subsequent visits, she frequented Gore House and the receptions of Lady Talbot de Malahide, corresponded with Lady Morgan (*Lady Morgan's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 345), made a pilgrimage to Byron's grave at Hucknall-Torkard, went to Harrow and dined with the Drurys, passed three hours with Mrs. Leigh, "always speaking" of Byron (Madden, *Life and Literary Correspondence of Lady Blessington*, vol. ii. pp. 243, 244). But she does not seem to have been generally received in English society. In 1851 (*Dict. Nat. Biog.*, vol. viii. p. 153) she married, as her second husband, Hilaire Étienne Octave Rouillé, Marquis de Boissy. The date, however, seems uncertain, for a letter is quoted in Madden's *Lady Blessington* (vol. ii. p. 253), signed by her as Marquise de Boissy, and dated "20 Juin, 1848." Speaking of her and her husband at this time, Lord Malmesbury (*Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 34) says—

"He was an eccentric man, with a large fortune and a fine
"house at Paris, where I dined at a magnificent banquet, the
"contrast being very striking after the frugal existence which in
"former years she led in Italy. . . . I found the *bonhomie* of the
"Italian altered for the artificial manner of a *grande dame*, and not
"to its advantage, although she retained the kindly instincts of her
"nature."

Byron's portrait hung in her *salon* at Paris, and visitors saw her stand before the picture, murmuring, "with a sigh exacted by old "memories, 'Qu'il était beau! Mon Dieu, qu'il était beau!'" (*Athenæum*, April 5, 1873, p. 439). The marquis was equally proud of the connexion; he is said (*Athenæum*, October 9, 1869, p. 465) to have often introduced her as "Madame la Marquise de "Boissy, ma femme, ancienne maîtresse de Lord Byron." After the death of the marquis, in 1866, she returned to Florence. In 1868 she published her *Lord Byron jugé par les Témoins de sa Vie* (translated in 1869 by Hubert E. H. Jerningham, under the title of

Digitized by Google

I will not forget your request about Missiaglia and the books.

About the 20th I leave Venice, to take a Journey into Romagna; but shall probably return in a month. Address to Venice as usual, and pray let me hear of the arrival of this packet.

Methinks I see you with a long face about *Don Juan*, anticipating the outcry and the scalping reviews that will ensue; *all that* is my affair: do you think I do not foresee all this as well as you? Why, Man, it will be nuts to all of them: they never had such an opportunity of being terrible; but don't *you* be out of sorts. I never vex you wilfully, as you may imagine; but you sometimes touch a jarring string, as, for instance, one or two in your last letter.

You are right about publishing *anonymously;* but in that case we will *omit* the dedication to Southey; I won't attack the dog so fiercely without putting my name —THAT is reviewer's work; so you may publish the poem without the dedicatory stanzas.

With regard to *Mazeppa* and the "Ode,"[1] you may join or separate them as you please, from the two Cantos.

Don't suppose I want to put you out of humour: I have a great respect for your good and gentlemanly qualities, and return your personal friendship towards me; and although I think you a little spoilt by "villainous "company" — wits, persons of honour about town, authors, and fashionables—together with your "I am "just going to call at Carlton House: are you walking

*My Recollections of Lord Byron*). Five years later, she died at Florence, in March, 1873. Obituary notices of Madame Guiccioli will be found in the *Times* for March 28, 1873, and the *Athenæum* for April 5, 1873, p. 439. (For police reports on Byron and the Guicciolis at Bologna, see Appendix VI.)

1. The *Ode on Venice*, published with *Mazeppa*, June 28, 1819.

Digitized by Google

"that way?"—I say, notwithstanding your "pictures, "taste, Shakespeare, and the musical glasses,"[1] you deserve and possess the esteem of those whose esteem is worth having, and of none more (however useless it may be) than

Yours very truly,

B.

P.S.—Make my respects to Mr. G[iffor]d. I am particularly aware that *Don Juan* must set us all by the ears; but that is my concern, and my beginning: there will be the *Edinburgh* and all too against it, so that, like Rob Roy, I shall have my hands full.[2]

## 733.—To John Murray.

Venice, May 15, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I have received and return by this post, under another Cover, the first proof of *Don Juan*. Before the Second can arrive, it is probable that I may have left Venice, and the length of my absence is so uncertain, that you had better proceed to the publication without boring me with more proofs. I send by last post an addition—and a new copy of "Julia's Letter," perceiving or supposing the former one in winter did not arrive.

Mr. Hobhouse is at it again about indelicacy. There is *no indelicacy;* if he wants *that*, let him read Swift, his great Idol; but his Imagination must be a dunghill, with a Viper's nest in the middle, to engender such a supposition about this poem.[3] For my part, I think you are

1. *Vicar of Wakefield*, chap. ix.
2. Rob Roy (chap. xxxv.) says, "Civil war is like a cockatrice. "... Now in sic a matter I'll hae need o' a' the hands I can mak'."
3. Compare *Don Juan*, Canto II. stanza ccxv.—

"For the first passion stays there such a while,
That all the rest creep in and form a junction,

Digitized by Google

all crazed. * * * Request him not "to put me in a "phrenzy,"[1] as Sir Anthony Absolute says, "though he "was not the indulgent father that I am."

I have got your extract, and the *Vampire*. I need not say it is *not mine*. There is a rule to go by: you are my publisher (till we quarrel), and what is not published by you is not written by me.

The story of Shelley's agitation is true.[2] I can't tell what seized him, for he don't want courage. He was once with me in a gale of Wind, in a small boat, right under the rocks between Meillerie and St. Gingo. We were five in the boat—a servant, two boatmen, and ourselves. The sail was mismanaged, and the boat was filling fast. He can't swim. I stripped off my coat—made him strip off his and take hold of an oar, telling him that I thought (being myself an expert swimmer) I could save him, if he would not struggle when I took hold of him—unless we got smashed against the rocks, which were high and sharp, with an awkward surf on them at that minute.

> Like knots of vipers on a dunghill's soil,
> Rage, fear, hate, jealousy, revenge, compunction,
> So that all mischiefs spring up from this entrail,
> Like earthquakes from the hidden fire call'd 'central.'"

1. *The Rivals*, act i. sc. 2, and act ii. sc. 1.

2. This story, as given in the "Extract of a Letter from Geneva," which serves as a Preface to the *Vampire*, is as follows:—

"It appears that one evening Lord B., Mr. P. B. Shelley, two "ladies, and the gentleman before alluded to, after having perused "a German work called *Phantasmagoria*, began relating ghost "stories, when his Lordship having recited the beginning of *Chris-* "*tabel*, then unpublished, the whole took so strong a hold of Mr. "Shelley's mind, that he suddenly started up, and ran out of the "room. The physician and Lord Byron followed, and discovered "him leaning against a mantel-piece, with cold drops of perspiration "trickling down his face. After having given him something to "refresh him, upon enquiring into the cause of his alarm, they found "that his wild imagination having pictured to him the bosom of one "of the ladies with eyes (which was reported of a lady in the neigh- "bourhood where he lived), he was obliged to leave the room in "order to destroy the impression."

Digitized by Google

We were then about a hundred yards from shore, and the boat in peril. He answered me with the greatest coolness, that "he had no notion of being saved, and that "I would have enough to do to save myself, and begged "not to trouble me." Luckily, the boat righted, and, baling, we got round a point into St. Gingo, where the inhabitants came down and embraced the boatmen on their escape, the Wind having been high enough to tear up some huge trees from the Alps above us, as we saw next day.

And yet the same Shelley, who was as cool as it was possible to be in such circumstances, (of which I am no judge myself, as the chance of swimming naturally gives self possession when near shore,) certainly had the fit of phantasy which Polidori describes,[1] though *not exactly* as he describes it.

1. In this, the next, and the last paragraphs, Byron refers to statements made by Polidori in the "Extract of a Letter from "Geneva," which prefaces *The Vampyre*. Thus on pp. xi.-xiii. Polidori says—

"He [*i.e.* Byron] only went into society there once, when M. "Pictet took him to the house of a lady to spend the evening. "They say he is a very singular man, and seem to think him very "uncivil. Amongst other things they relate that, having invited "M. Pictet and Bonstetten to dinner, he went on to the lake to "Chillon, leaving a gentleman who travelled with him to receive "them and make apologies. Another evening, being invited to the "house of Lady D—— H——, he promised to attend, but upon "approaching the windows of her ladyship's villa, and perceiving "the room to be full of company, he set down his friend, desiring "him to plead his excuse, and immediately returned home. This "will serve as a contradiction to the report which you tell me is "current in England, of his having been avoided by his countrymen "on the Continent. The case happens to be directly the reverse, "as he has been generally sought by them, though on most occasions "apparently without success. It is said, indeed, that upon paying "his first visit at Coppet, following the servant who had announced "his name, he was surprised to meet a lady carried out fainting; "but before he had been seated many minutes, the same lady, who "had been so affected at the sound of his name, returned and con- "versed with him a considerable time—such is female curiosity and "affectation! He visited Coppet frequently, and of course associated

Digitized by Google

The story of the agreement to write the Ghost-books is true; but the ladies are *not* sisters. One is Godwin's daughter by Mary Wolstonecraft, and the other the *present* Mrs. Godwin's daughter by a former husband. So much for Scoundrel Southey's story of "*incest;*" neither was there *any promiscuous intercourse* whatever. Both are an invention of that execrable villain Southey, whom I will term so as publicly as he deserves. Mary Godwin (now Mrs. Shelley) wrote *Frankenstein*,[1] which you have reviewed, thinking it Shelley's. Methinks it is a wonderful work for a girl of nineteen,—*not* nineteen, indeed, at that time. I enclose you the beginning of mine,[2] by

"there with several of his countrymen, who evinced no reluctance "to meet him whom his enemies alone would represent as an "outcast."

Again (pp. xiv., xv.)—

"I must, however, free him from one imputation attached to "him . . . of having in his house two sisters as the partakers of his "revels. This is, like many other charges which have been brought "against his Lordship, entirely destitute of truth. His only com- "panion was the physician I have already mentioned. The report "originated from the following circumstance: Mr. Percy Bysshe "Shelly, a gentleman well known for extravagance of doctrine, and "for his daring, in their profession, even to sign himself with the "title of Ἄθεος in the Album at Chamouny, having taken a house "below, in which he resided with Miss M. W. Godwin and Miss "Clermont (the daughters of the celebrated Mr. Godwin), they "were frequently visitors at Diodati, and were often seen upon the "lake with his Lordship, which gave rise to the report, the truth of "which is here positively denied."

1. In the *Edinburgh Magazine* (March, 1818), of which Murray was then a co-proprietor, there appeared an article on *Frankenstein* by Sir Walter Scott, in which the reviewer says, "The author seems "to us to disclose uncommon powers of poetic imagination. It is no "slight merit in our eyes, that the tale, though wild in incident, is "written in plain and forcible English, without exhibiting that "mixture of hyperbolical Germanisms with which tales of wonder "are usually told, as if it were necessary that the language should be "as extravagant as the fiction. The ideas of the author are always "clearly as well as forcibly expressed; and his descriptions of "landscape have in them the choice requisites of truth, freshness, "precision, and beauty." (See Scott's *Miscell. Prose Works*, vol. xviii. p. 267.)

2. This was published under the title of *A Fragment*, in 1819,

Digitized by Google

which you will see how far it resembles Mr. Colburn's publication.[1] If you choose to publish it in the *Edinburgh Magazine* (*Wilson's and Blackwood's*) you may, *stating why*, and with such explanatory proem as you please. I never went on with it, as you will perceive by the date. I began it in an old account-book of Miss Milbanke's, which I kept because it contains the word "House-" hold," written by her twice on the inside blank page of the covers, being the only two scraps I have in the world in her writing, except her name to the Deed of Separation. Her letters I sent back except those of the quarrelling correspondence, and those, being documents, are placed in possession of a third person (Mr. Hobhouse), with copies of several of my own; so that I have no kind of memorial whatever of her, but these *two* words,—and her actions. I have torn the leaves containing the part of the Tale out of the book, and enclose them with this sheet.

Next week I set out for Romagna—at least in all probability. You had better go on with the publications without waiting to hear farther, for I have other things in my head. "Mazeppa" and "The Ode" *Separate*—what think you? *Juan anonymously*, without the dedication, for I won't be shabby and attack Southey under Cloud of night.

What do you mean? First you seem hurt by my letter, and then, in your next, you talk of its "power," and so forth. "This is a damned blind story, Jack; but "never mind, go on." You may be sure I said nothing *on purpose* to plague you; but if you will put me "in a

together with *Mazeppa* and the *Ode on Venice* (see *Letters*, vol. iii. pp. 449 to end).

1. *I.e.* Polidori's *Vampire*, which appeared in the *New Monthly Magazine* (April, 1819), published by Henry Colburn, and was afterwards printed separately (see p. 286, *note* 1).

Digitized by Google

"phrenzy, I will never call you Beck (*sic*) again."[1] I remember nothing of the epistle at present.

What do you mean by Polidori's *Diary*?[2] Why, I defy him to say any thing about me, but he is welcome. I have nothing to reproach me with on his score, and I am much mistaken if that is not his *own* opinion. But why publish the names of the two girls? and in such a manner?—what a blundering piece of exculpation! *He* asked Pictet, etc., to dinner, and of course was left to entertain them. I went into Society *solely* to present *him* (as I told him), that he might return into good company if he chose; it was the best thing for his youth and circumstances: for myself, I had done with Society, and, having presented him, withdrew to my own "way of life." It is true that I returned without entering Lady Dalrymple Hamilton's,[3] because I saw it full. It is true that Mrs. Hervey[4] (she writes novels) fainted at my entrance into

1. In *The Rivals* (act i. sc. 2) *Sir Anthony Absolute* says, "Ob-"jection! Let him object if he dare! No, no, Mrs. Malaprop, "Jack knows that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly," etc., etc.

And again (*ibid.*, act ii. sc. 1) Sir Anthony says to his son, "I'll "disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! And damn me! "if ever I call you Jack again."

2. The unpublished manuscript of Polidori's *Diary* is in the possession of Mr. W. M. Rossetti.

3. See *Letters*, vol. iv. p. 298, *note* 1.

4. A former editor identifies the fainting novelist with Jane Harvey, author of *Records of a Noble Family* (1814), and numerous other novels, some of which were published by subscription at Newcastle-on-Tyne, from 1794 to 1828. It seems, however, more probable that it was Beckford's sister, whose novels her brother burlesqued in *The Elegant Enthusiast*, etc. (1796), and *Azemia* (1797). (See Moore's *Memoirs, etc.*, vol. ii. p. 197, for a somewhat inaccurate account of the latter novel, and for a note by Lord John Russell on Mrs. Harvey: "Notwithstanding her brother's raillery, Mrs. Harvey "was a very accomplished, as well as a very amiable woman.") If the name is given correctly by Byron as Hervey, the novelist may be Elizabeth Hervey, who in 1813 published her *Amabel*, and a third edition of her *Mourtray Family* (1810), and in 1815 *Auberry Stanhope, or Memoirs of an Author*. The fainting-fit is mentioned

Digitized by Google

Coppet, and then came back again. On her fainting, the Duchesse de Broglie exclaimed, "This is *too much*—"at *sixty-five* years of age!"—I never gave "the English" an opportunity of "avoiding" me; but I trust that, if ever I do, they will seize it.

I am, yours very truly,

B.

## 734.—To John Murray.

Venice, May 18, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—Yesterday I wrote to Mr. Hobhouse and returned the proof under cover to you. Tell Mr. Hobhouse that in the Ferrara Story I told him, the phrase was *Vi riveresco Signor Cognato* and *not Cognato mio* as I stated yesterday by mistake.

I wrote to you in haste and at past two in the morning having besides had an accident. In going, about an hour and a half ago, to a rendezvous with a Venetian girl (unmarried and the daughter of one of their nobles), I tumbled into the Grand Canal, and, not choosing to miss my appointment by the delays of changing, I have been perched in a balcony with my wet clothes on ever since, till this minute that on my return I have slipped into my dressing-gown. My foot slipped in getting into my Gondola to set out (owing to the cursed slippery steps of their palaces), and in I flounced like a Carp, and went dripping like a Triton to my Sea nymph and had to scramble up to a grated window:—

> Fenced with iron within and without
> Lest the lover get in or the Lady get out.

by Lady Blennerhassett (*Madame de Staël*, vol. iii. p. 569), who also spells the name Hervey.

Digitized by Google

She is a very dear friend of mine, and I have undergone some trouble on her account, for last winter the truculent tyrant her flinty-hearted father, having been informed by an infernal German, Countess Vorsperg (their next neighbour), of our meetings, they sent a priest to me, and a Commissary of police, and they locked the Girl up, and gave her prayers and bread and water, and our connection was cut off for some time; but the father hath lately been laid up, and the brother is at Milan, and the mother falls asleep, and the Servants are naturally on the wrong side of the question, and there is no Moon at Midnight just now, so that we have lately been able to recommence; the fair one is eighteen; her name, Angelina; the family name, of course, I don't tell you.

She proposed to me to divorce my mathematical wife, and I told her that in England we can't divorce except for *female* infidelity. "And pray, (said she), how do you "know what she may have been doing these last three "years?" I answered that I could not tell, but that the * * * was not quite so flourishing in Great Britain as with us here. "But," she said, "can't you get rid of her?" "Not more than is done already (I answered): You "would not have me *poison her?*" Would you believe it? She made me *no answer.* Is not that a true and odd national trait? It spoke more than a thousand words, and yet this is a little, pretty, sweet-tempered, quiet feminine being as ever you saw, but the Passions of a Sunny Soil are paramount to all other considerations. An unmarried Girl naturally wishes to be married: if she can marry and love at the same time it is well, but at any rate she must love. I am not sure that my pretty paramour was herself fully aware of the inference to be drawn from her dead Silence, but even the unconsciousness of the latent idea was striking to an observer of the

Digitized by Google

Passions; and I never strike out a thought of another's or of my own without trying to trace it to its Source.

I wrote to Mr. H. pretty fully about our matters. In a few days I leave Venice for Romagna. Excuse this scrawl, for I write in a state of shivering from having sat in my dripping drapery, and from some other little accessories which affect this husk of our immortal Kernel.

Tell Augusta that I wrote to her by yesterday's post, addressed to your Care. Let me know if you come out this Summer that I may be in the way, and come to me; don't go to an Inn. I do not know that I can promise you any pleasure; "our way of life" is so different in these parts, but I insure to myself a great deal in seeing you, and in endeavouring (however vainly) to prove to you that I am, very truly

Yours ever,

B.

P.S.—I have read Parson Hodgson's *Friends*[1] in which he seems to display his knowledge of the subject

1. *The Friends: a Poem.* In Four Books. By the Rev. Francis Hodgson, A.M., was published by Murray in 1818. It is dedicated to the Duke of Rutland, and sings the praises, *inter alios*, of "undaunted Granby," who at Minden was "first of England's "chivalry." In the third book (p. 96) occur the lines—

"Not yet the wholesome dread of thee was o'er,
Proud wit!—but Dulness thrives, for Pope is now no more."

To these lines is added a note (pp. 181, 182), in which Hodgson attacks those critics who depreciate "this energetic, melodious, and "moral poet."

In the same book (pp. 99, 100) are the lines in which Byron detects a reference to himself, beginning—

"Then how shall she, the Moral Muse, atone
For fixing wretched Man on motives all his own?" etc.

The note (pp. 183, 184) plainly alludes to Byron, where he speaks of a "favourite author," whose "studiously attempted exclusion of "all religious motives, feelings, and principles, from a vast variety "of characters," is a great defect, etc., etc.

Digitized by Google

by a Covert attack or two on some of his own. He probably wants another Living; at least I judge so by the prominence of his piety, although he was always pious—even when he was kept by a Washerwoman on the New Road. I have seen him Cry over her picture, which he generally wore under his left Armpit. But he is a good man, and I have no doubt does his duty by his Parish. As to the poetry of his New-fangled Stanza, I wish they would write the octave or the Spenser; we have no other legitimate measure of that kind. He is right in defending *Pope* against the bastard Pelicans of the poetical winter day, who add insult to their Parricide by sucking the blood of the parent of English *real* poetry—poetry without fault,—and then spurning the bosoms which fed them.

## 735.—To John Murray.

Venice, May 20th, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I should be glad to know why Mr. Hobhouse has not yet seen the Second Canto, and why you took no notice nor gave any answer to Mr. Kinnaird, when he read to you a passage from my letter to him requesting *him* to adjust with you some business? Let me know the *precise time* of your coming here that I may be in the way to receive you, and pray bring me some "*Macassar*" or "*Russia Oil*," as I begin to get venerable.

You talk of "approximations to indelicacy;"[1] this reminds me of George Lamb's quarrel at Cambridge with Scrope Davies. "Sir," said George, "he *hinted* at "my *illegitimacy*." "Yes," said Scrope, "I called him

1. Murray (*Memoir of John Murray, etc.*, vol. i. p. 402) had written to ask Byron to alter certain passages in *Don Juan*: "Pray use "your most tasteful discretion so as to wrap up or leave out certain "approximations to indelicacy."

Digitized by Google

"a damned adulterous bastard"; the approximation and the hint are not unlike.

What think you of Canto Second? *There's* a gale of wind for you! all nautical and true to the vocabulary. Ask the *Navy List*.

Yours ever,

B.

## 736.—To John Murray.

Venice, May 25, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I have received no proofs by the last post, and shall probably have quitted Venice before the arrival of the next. There wanted a few stanzas to the termination of Canto 1st in the last proof; the next will, I presume, contain them, and the whole or a portion of Canto 2d; but it will be idle to wait for further answers from me, as I have directed that my letters wait for my return (perhaps in a month, and probably so); therefore do not wait for further advice from me. You may as well talk to the Wind, and better—for *it* will at least convey your accents a little further than they would otherwise have gone; whereas *I* shall neither echo nor acquiesce in your "exquisite reasons." You may omit the *note* of reference to Hobhouse's travels in Canto second, and you will put as motto to the whole—

"Difficile est proprie communia dicere."

HORACE.[1]

I have requested Mr. Kinnaird to settle with you, and whatever he may say is authorized by me. I mention this as you took no notice when he spoke to you before. I am also not a little surprized that Mr. Hobhouse has not yet seen Canto Second.

1. *Epist. ad Pisones*, line 128.



Digitized by Google

A few days ago I sent you all I know of Polidori's *Vampire*. He may do, say, or write what he pleases, but I wish he would not attribute to me his own compositions. If he has any thing of mine in his possession, the MS. will put it beyond controversy; but I scarcely think that any one who knows me would believe the thing in the Magazine to be mine, even if they saw it in my own hieroglyphics.

I write to you in the agonies of a *sirocco*, which annihilates me; and I have been fool enough to do four things since dinner, which are as well omitted in very hot weather: 1stly, * * * *; 2dly, to play at billiards from ten till twelve, under the influence of lighted lamps that doubled the heat; 3dly, to go afterwards into a red-hot Conversazione of the Countess Benzone's; and, 4thly, to begin this letter at three in the morning: but being begun, it must be finished.

Ever very truly and affectionately yours,

B.

P.S.—I petition for tooth-brushes, powder, Magnesia, Macassar oil [1] (or Russia), *the* sashes, and Sir Nl. Wraxall's *Memoirs of his own Times*.[2] I want, besides, a Bulldog, a terrier, and two Newfoundland dogs; and I want (is it Buck's?) a Life of *Richard 3d*, advertised by Longman *long, long, long* ago;[3] I asked you for it at least three years since. See Longman's advertisements.

1. "In virtues nothing earthly could surpass her,
Save thine 'incomparable oil,' Macassar!"
*Don Juan*, Canto I. stanza xvii.

2. *Historical Memoirs of my own Time from* 1772 *to* 1784, by Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, *Bart.*, 2 vols., London, 1815, 8vo. A third edition appeared in 1818.

3. Sir George Buc's *Life and Reign of Richard III.* (See *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 371, *note* 2.)

Digitized by Google

## 737.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Padua, June 2d 1819.

My dear Hoppner,—When you see that learned Clerk Edgecombe,[1] will you tell him in your most agreeable manner, that the repairs of the Carriages, which he stated to be so complete as to warrant him in paying a hundred francs above the agreement, are very far from doing credit to him or the Coachmaker here? The wheels of the Servants' carriage had not *been touched;* the wheels of my own made rather worse than before, and, so far from being *cleaned*, they had not even wiped the *Glasses*. Will you hint to him that, if I don't find my Palazzo and Casini, in town and country, in rather better order at my *ritorno* than I found the carriages at setting out, I will remit him to be Supercargo to a Venetian fishing boat. And now he may go home and beat Mrs. Edgecombe.

I am just setting off for Ferrara. Mengaldo gave me a letter to the Podesta, Count Mosti, for which I am grateful which is a troublesome sensation. I am proceeding in no very good humour, for La G[uiccioli]'s instructions are rather calculated to produce an *éclat*—and perhaps a scene—than any decent iniquity. I had a letter from her on Monday, which merely repeated the directions she had given me before, with the addition of something about her own house.

Now to go to cuckold a Papal Count, who, like Candide, has already been "the death of two men one "of whom was a priest," in his own house is rather too much for my modesty, when there are several other

1. A clerk at the English Consulate, whom Byron at this time employed to look after his accounts.

Digitized by Google

places at least as good for the purpose. She says they must go to Bologna in the middle of June, and why the devil then drag me to Ravenna? However, I shall determine nothing till I get to Bologna, and probably take some time to decide when I am there, so that, the Gods willing, you may probably see me again soon. The Charmer forgets that a man may be whistled anywhere *before*, but that *after*—a Journey in an Italian June is a Conscription, and therefore she should have been less liberal in Venice, or less exigent at Ravenna.

If I was not the most constant of men, I should now be swimming from the Lido, instead of smoking in the dust of Padua.

Should there be letters from England, let them wait my return. And do look at my house and (not lands but) Waters, and scold, and deal out the monies to Edgecombe with an air of reluctance, and a shake of the head, and put queer questions to him, and turn up your nose when he answers.

Make my respects to the Consuless—and to the Chevalier, and to Scotin, and to all the Counts and Countesses of our acquaintance.

And believe me, ever your disconsolate and affectionate,

B.

## 738.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Bologna, June 6, 1819.

DEAR HOPPNER,—I am at length joined to Bologna, where I am settled like a sausage, and shall be broiled like one, if this weather continues. Will you thank Mengaldo on my part for the Ferrara acquaintance, which was a very agreeable one. I stayed two days at

Digitized by Google

Ferrara, and was much pleased with the Count Mosti, and the little the shortness of the time permitted me to see of his family. I went to his conversazione, which is very far superior to any thing of the kind at Venice—the women almost all young—several pretty —and the men courteous and cleanly. The lady of the mansion, who is young, lately married, and with child, appeared very pretty by candlelight (I did not see her by day), pleasing in her manners, and very lady-like, or thorough-bred, as we call it in England,—a kind of thing which reminds one of a racer, an antelope, or an Italian greyhound. She seems very fond of her husband, who is amiable and accomplished: he has been in England two or three times, and is young. The sister, a Countess somebody—I forget what—(they are both Maffei by birth, and Veronese of course)—is a lady of more display; she sings and plays divinely; but I thought she was a damned long time about it. Her likeness to Madame Flahaut[1] (Miss Mercer that was) is something quite extraordinary.

I had but a bird's eye view of these people, and shall not probably see them again; but I am very much obliged to Mengaldo for letting me see them at all. Whenever I meet with any thing agreeable in this world, it surprises me so much, and pleases me so much (when my passions are not interested one way or the other), that I go on wondering for a week to come. I feel, too, in great admiration of the Cardinal Legate's red stockings.

1. The Hon. Margaret Mercer Elphinstone, afterwards Baroness Keith. In 1817 she married Count Flahault (see *Letters*, vol. iii. p. 253, *note* 1), and on the death of her father, in 1823, she succeeded to the peerage.

Digitized by Google

I found, too, such a pretty epitaph in the Certosa cemetery, or rather two: one was,

"Martini Luigi
Implora pace;"

the other,

"Lucrezia Picini
Implora eterna quiete."

That was all; but it appears to me that these two and three words comprise and compress all that can be said on the subject,—and then, in Italian, they are absolute music. They contain doubt, hope, and humility; nothing can be more pathetic than the *implora* and the modesty of the request;—they have had enough of life—they want nothing but rest—they implore it, and *eterna quiete.* It is like a Greek inscription in some good old heathen "City of the Dead." Pray, if I am shovelled into the Lido churchyard in your time, let me have the *implora pace*, and nothing else, for my epitaph. I never met with any, ancient or modern, that pleased me a tenth part so much.

In about a day or two after you receive this letter, I will thank you to desire Edgecombe to prepare for my return. I shall go back to Venice before I village on the Brenta. I shall stay but a few days in Bologna. I am just going out to see sights, but shall not present my introductory letters for a day or two, till I have run over again the place and pictures; nor perhaps at all, if I find that I have books and sights enough to do without the inhabitants. After that I shall return to Venice, where you may expect me about the eleventh, or perhaps sooner.[1] Pray make my thanks acceptable to Mengaldo:

1. On the outside cover of the letter Byron has written the words, "I am just setting off for Ravenna, June 8, 1819. I changed my

Digitized by Google

my respects to the Consuless, and to Mr. Scott. I hope my daughter is well.

Ever yours, and truly,

B.

"mind this morning, and decided to go on." The following is Madame Guiccioli's account of Byron's visit to Ravenna, with Moore's translation (*Life*, pp. 399, 400) :—

"Partendo io da Venezia egli promise di venir a vedermi a "Ravenna. La Tomba di Dante, il classico bosco di pini, gli "avvanzi di antichità che a Ravenna si trovano davano a me ragioni "plausibili per invitarlo a venire, ed a lui per accettare l'invito. "Egli venne difatti nel mese Giugno, e giunse a Ravenna nel giorno "della Solennità del Corpus Domini, mentre io attaccata da una "malattia de consunzione ch' ebbe principio dalla mia partenza da "Venezia era vicina a morire. L'arrivo in Ravenna d'un forestiero "distinto, in un paese così lontano dalle strade che ordinariamente "tengono i viaggiatori era un avvenimento del quale molto si "parlava, indagandosene i motivi, che involontariamente poi egli "feci conoscere. Perchè avendo egli domandato di me per venire "a vedermi ed essendogli risposto 'che non potrebbe vedermi più "perchè ero vicina a morire'—egli rispose che in quel caso voleva "morire egli pure; la qual cosa essendosi poi ripetata si conobbe "così l'oggetto del suo viaggio.

"Il Conte Guiccioli visitò Lord Byron, essendolo conosciuto in "Venezia, e nella speranza che la di lui compagnia potesse distrarmi "ed essermi di qualche giovamento nello stato in cui mi trovavo "egli lo invitò di venire a visitarmi. Il giorno appresso egli venne. "Non si potrebbero descrivere le cure, i pensieri delicati, quanto "egli fece per me. Per molto tempo egli non ebbe per le mani "che dei Libri di Medicina; e poco confidandosi nel miei medici "ottenne dal Conte Guiccioli il permeso di far venire un valente "medico di lui amico nel quale egli aveva molta confidenza. Le "cure del Professore Aglietti (così si chiama questo distinto Italiano) "la tranquillità anzi la felicità inesprimibile che mi cagionava la "presenza di Lord Byron migliorarono così rapidamente la mia "salute che entro lo spazio di due mesi potei seguire mio marito "in un giro che egli doveva fare per le sue terre."

"On my departure from Venice, he had promised to come and "see me at Ravenna. Dante's tomb, the classical pine wood, the "relics of antiquity which are to be found in that place, afforded "a sufficient pretext for me to invite him to come, and for him to "accept my invitation. He came, in fact, in the month of June, "arriving at Ravenna on the day of the festival of the Corpus "Domini; while I, attacked by a consumptive complaint, which "had its origin from the moment of my quitting Venice, appeared "on the point of death. The arrival of a distinguished foreigner at "Ravenna, a town so remote from the routes ordinarily followed

Digitized by Google

P.S.—I went over the Ariosto MS., etc., etc., again at Ferrara, with the castle, and cell, and house, etc., etc.

One of the Ferrarese asked me if I knew "Lord "Byron," an acquaintance of his, *now* at Naples. I told him "*No!*" which was true both ways; for I knew not an impostor, and in the other, no one knows himself. He stared when told that I was "the real Simon Pure."[1] Another asked me if I had *not translated* "Tasso." You see what *fame* is! how *accurate!* how *boundless!* I don't know how others feel, but I am always the lighter and the better looked on when I have got rid of mine; it sits on me like armour on the Lord Mayor's champion; and I got rid of all the husk of literature, and the attendant babble, by answering, that I had not translated Tasso, but a namesake had; and by the

"by travellers, was an event which gave rise to a good deal of "conversation. His motives for such a visit became the subject "of discussion, and these he himself afterwards involuntarily "divulged; for having made some inquiries with a view to "paying me a visit, and being told that it was unlikely that he "would ever see me again, as I was at the point of death, he "replied, if such were the case, he hoped that he should die also; "which circumstance, being repeated, revealed the object of his "journey.

"Count Guiccioli, having been acquainted with Lord Byron at "Venice, went to visit him now, and in the hope that his presence "might amuse, and be of some use to me in the state in which I "then found myself, invited him to call upon me. He came the "day following. It is impossible to describe the anxiety he showed, "—the delicate attentions that he paid me. For a long time he "had perpetually medical books in his hands; and not trusting my "physicians, he obtained permission from Count Guiccioli to send "for a very clever physician, a friend of his, in whom he placed "great confidence. The attentions of Professor Aglietti (for so this "celebrated Italian was called), together with tranquillity, and the "inexpressible happiness which I experienced in Lord Byron's "society, had so good an effect on my health, that only two months "afterwards I was able to accompany my husband in a tour he was "obliged to make to visit his various estates."

1. In Mrs. Centlivre's *Bold Stroke for a Wife.*

Digitized by Google

blessing of Heaven, I looked so little like a poet, that every body believed me.

## 739.—To John Murray.

Bologna, June 7, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—Tell Mr. Hobhouse that I wrote to him a few days ago from Ferrara. It will therefore be idle in him or you to wait for any further answers or returns of proofs from Venice, as I have directed that no English letters be sent after me. The publication can be proceeded in without, and I am already sick of your remarks, to which I think not the least attention ought to be paid.

Tell Mr. Hobhouse that, since I wrote to him, I had availed myself of my Ferrara letters, and found the society much younger and better there than at Venice. I was very much pleased with the little the shortness of my stay permitted me to see of the Gonfaloniere Count Mosti, and his family and friends in general.

I have been picture-gazing this morning at the famous Domenichino and Guido,[1] both of which are superlative. I afterwards went to the beautiful Cimetery of Bologna, beyond the walls, and found, besides the superb Burial-ground, an original of a *Custode*, who reminded me of the grave-digger in Hamlet. He has a collection of Capuchins' skulls, labelled on the forehead, and taking down one of them, said, "This was Brother Desiderio "Berro, who died at forty—one of my best friends. I "begged his head of his brethren after his decease, and "they gave it me. I put it in lime and then boiled it.

1. Probably Domenichino's "Martyrdom of St. Peter, the "Dominican," or his "Martyrdom of St. Agnes," and Guido's "Slaughter of the Innocents."

Digitized by Google

"Here it is, teeth and all, in excellent preservation. He "was the merriest, cleverest fellow I ever knew. Where- "ever he went, he brought joy; and when any one was "melancholy, the sight of him was enough to make him "cheerful again. He walked so actively, you might have "taken him for a dancer—he joked—he laughed—oh! "he was such a Frate as I never saw before, nor ever "shall again!"

He told me that he had himself planted all the Cypresses in the Cimetery; that he had the greatest attachment to them and to his dead people; that since 1801 they had buried fifty three thousand persons. In showing some older monuments, there was that of a Roman girl of twenty, with a bust by Bernini.[1] She was a Princess Barberini, dead two centuries ago: he said that, on opening her grave, they had found her hair complete, and "as yellow as gold." Some of the epitaphs at Ferrara pleased me more than the more splendid monuments of Bologna; for instance:—

"Martini Luigi
Implora pace."

"Lucrezia Picini
Implora eterna quiete."

Can any thing be more full of pathos? Those few words say all that can be said or sought: the dead had had enough of life; all they wanted was rest, and this they "*implore*." There is all the helplessness, and humble hope, and deathlike prayer, that can arise from the grave —"*implora pace*." I hope, whoever may survive me, and shall see me put in the foreigners' burying-ground at

1. Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini (1598–1680), painter, sculptor, and architect, was called by his contemporaries, "the modern Michael "Angelo." He executed a bust of Charles I. from three pictures by Vandyck.

Digitized by Google

the Lido, within the fortress by the Adriatic, will see those two words, and no more, put over me. I trust they won't think of "pickling, and bringing me home "to Clod or Blunderbuss Hall."[1] I am sure my bones would not rest in an English grave, or my clay mix with the earth of that country. I believe the thought would drive me mad on my deathbed, could I suppose that any of my friends would be base enough to convey my carcase back to your soil. I would not even feed your worms, if I could help it.

So, as Shakespeare says of Mowbray, the banished Duke of Norfolk, who died at Venice (see Richard II.[2]), that he, after fighting

> "Against black pagans, Turks, and Saracens,
> And toil'd with works of war, retir'd himself
> To Italy; and there, at *Venice*, gave
> His body to that *pleasant* country's earth,
> And his pure soul unto his Captain Christ,
> Under whose colours he had fought so long."

Before I left Venice, I had returned to you your late, and Mr. Hobhouse's, sheets of *Juan*. Don't wait for further answers from me, but address yours to Venice, as usual. I know nothing of my own movements; I may return there in a few days, or not for some time. All this depends on circumstances. I left Mr. Hoppner very well, as well as his son and Mrs. Hoppner. My daughter Allegra was well too, and is growing pretty; her hair is growing darker, and her eyes are blue. Her temper and her ways, Mr. Hoppner says, are like mine,

1. *The Rivals*, act v. sc. 3: "*Acres*. Odds backs and abettors! "I'll be your second with all my heart; and if you should "get a *quietus*, you may command me, entirely. I'll get you "*snug lying* in the *Abbey here*; or *pickle* you, and send you over "to Blunderbuss Hall, or anything of the kind, with the greatest "pleasure."

2. *Richard II.*, act iv. sc. 1.

Digitized by Google

as well as her features: she will make, in that case, a manageable young lady.

I never hear any thing of Ada, the little Electra of my Mycenæ; the moral Clytemnestra is not very communicative of her tidings, but there will come a day of reckoning, even if I should not live to see it.

I have at least seen Romilly shivered who was one of the assassins. When that felon, or lunatic (take your choice he must be one and might be both), was doing his worst to uproot my whole family tree, branch, and blossoms; when, after taking my retainer, he went over to them; when he was bringing desolation on my hearth and destruction on my household Gods, did he think that, in less than three years, a natural event—a severe domestic—but an expected and common domestic calamity,—would lay his carcase in a cross road, or stamp his name in a verdict of Lunacy? Did he (who in his drivelling sexagenary dotage had not the courage to survive his Nurse—for what else was a wife to him at his time of life?)—reflect or consider what my feelings must have been, when wife, and child, and sister, and name, and fame, and country were to be my sacrifice on his legal altar—and this at a moment when my health was declining, my fortune embarrassed, and my mind had been shaken by many kinds of disappointment, while I was yet young and might have reformed what might be wrong in my conduct, and retrieved what was perplexing in my affairs. But the wretch is in his grave. I detested him living, and I will not affect to pity him dead; I still loathe him—as much as we can hate dust—but that is nothing.

What a long letter I have scribbled!

Yours truly,

B.

Digitized by Google

P.S.—Here, as in Greece, they strew flowers on the tombs. I saw a quantity of rose-leaves, and entire roses, scattered over the graves at Ferrara. It has the most pleasing effect you can imagine.

## 740.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Ravenna, June 20th 1819.

My dear Hoppner,—I wrote to you a week ago (particularly begging a line in answer by return of post) to request you would send off Augustine with the two Grey saddle horses, and the Carriage and Carriage horses, saddles, etc., to wait for me at the *Pellegrino*—(the Inn there) in *Bologna*. To this letter and one of the same purport to Mr. Scott, I have had no answer, which makes me uneasy as I shall probably not return to Venice for some time. I wished my English letters also to be forwarded with Augustine to Bologna. If there was any want of Money, Siri and Willhalm would equip him.

Pray write to me here (*Ravenna*) by next post; it will reach me in time, and do not let Augustine delay a moment for the nonsense of that son of a bitch Edgecombe, who may probably be the cause of his dawdling.

I wrote to you from Padua, and from Bologna, and since from Ravenna. I find my situation very agreeable, but want my horses very much, there being good riding in the environs. I can fix no time for my return to Venice—it may be soon or late—or not at all—it all depends on the *Dama*, whom I found very seriously in *bed* with a cough and spitting of blood,[1] etc., all of which

1. "Durante la mia malattia," says Madame Guiccioli (Moore's *Life*, p. 402, *note*), "L. B. era sempre presso di me, prestandomi

Digitized by Google

has subsided, and something else has recommenced. Her miscarriage has made her a good deal thinner; and I found all the people here firmly persuaded that she would never recover;—they were mistaken, however.

My letters were useful as far as I employed them; and I like both the place and people, though I don't trouble the latter more than I can help. *She* manages very well * * * * * but if I come away with a Stiletto in my gizzard some fine afternoon, I shall not be astonished.

I can't make *him* out at all—he visits me frequently, and takes me out (like Whittington, the Lord Mayor) in a coach and *six* horses. The fact appears to be, that he is completely *governed* by her—for that matter, so am I.[1] The people here don't know what to make

"le più sensibili cure, e quando passai allo stato di convalescenza "egli era sempre al mio fianco;—e in società, e al teatro, e caval- "cando, e passeggiando egli non si allontanava mai da me. In "quel' epoca essendo egli privo de' suoi libri, e de' suoi cavalli, "e di tuttociò che lo occupava in Venezia io lo pregai di volersi "occupare per me scrivendo qualche cosa sul Dante; ed egli colla "usata sua facilità e rapidità scrisse la sua *Profezia*."

"During my illness, he was for ever near me, paying me the "most amiable attentions, and when I became convalescent he was "constantly at my side. In society, at the theatre, riding, walking, "he never was absent from me. Being deprived at that time of "his books, his horses, and all that occupied him at Venice, I "begged him to gratify me by writing something on the subject "of Dante, and, with his usual facility and rapidity, he composed "his *Prophecy*."

1. "That this task of 'governing' him was one of more ease "than, from the ordinary view of his character, might be concluded, "I have more than once, in these pages, expressed my opinion, and "shall here quote, in corroboration of it, the remark of his own "servant (founded on an observation of more than twenty years), in "speaking of his master's matrimonial fate: 'It is very odd, but I "never yet knew a lady that could not manage my Lord, *except* "my Lady.'

"'More knowledge,' says Johnson, 'may be gained of a man's "real character by a short conversation with one of his servants "than from the most formal and studied narrative'" (Moore).

Digitized by Google

of us, as he had the character of jealousy with all his wives—this is the third. He is the richest of the Ravennese, by their own account, but is not popular among them.

By the aid of a Priest, a Chambermaid, a young Negro-boy, and a female friend, we are enabled to carry on our unlawful loves, as far as they can well go, though generally with some peril, especially as the female friend and priest are at present out of town for some days, so that some of the precautions devolve upon the Maid and Negro.

Now do pray—send off Augustine—and carriage—and cattle to Bologna without fail or delay—or I shall lose my remaining Shred of senses.

Don't forget this. My coming—going—and every thing depends upon *her* entirely just as Mrs. Hoppner—(to whom I remit my reverences) said, in the true spirit of female prophecy.

You are but a shabby fellow not to have written before—and I am,

Truly yours,

B.

P.S.—Address by return of Post to me—at *Ravenna*.

## 741.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, June 29, 1819.

Dear Sir,—The letters have been forwarded from Venice, but I trust that you will not have waited for further alterations—I will make none.

You ask me to spare Romilly—ask the worms. His dust *can* suffer nothing from the truth being spoken, and, if it *could*, how did he behave to me? You

Digitized by Google

may talk to the Wind, which will carry the Sound, and to the Caves, which will echo you, but *not* to me on the subject of a villain who wronged me, whether dead or alive.

I have no time to return you the proofs—publish without them. I am glad you think the poesy good; and as to "thinking of the effect," think *you* of the sale, and leave me to pluck the Porcupines who may point their quills at you.

I have been here (at Ravenna) these four weeks, having left Venice a month ago;—I came to see my *Amica*, the Countess Guiccioli, who has been, and still continues, very unwell. * * She is only twenty years old, but not of a strong constitution. * * She has a perpetual cough and an intermittent fever, but bears up most *gallantly* in every sense of the word. Her husband (this is his third wife) is the richest noble of Ravenna, and almost of Romagna; he is also *not* the youngest, being upwards of threescore, but in good preservation. All this will appear strange to you, who do not understand the Meridian morality, nor our way of life in such respects, and I cannot at present expound the difference; —but you would find it much the same in these parts. At Faenza there is Lord Kinnaird with an opera girl; and at the inn in the same town is a Neapolitan Prince, who serves the wife of the Gonfaloniere of that city. I am on duty here—so you see "Così fan "tutti e tutte."

I have my horses here—*saddle* as well as carriage —and ride or drive every day in the forest, the *Pineta*, the scene of Boccaccio's novel, and Dryden's fable of Honoria, etc., etc.;[1] and I see my *Dama* every day at

1. "Sweet hour of twilight!—in the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore

Digitized by Google

the proper (and improper) hours; but I feel seriously uneasy about her health, which seems very precarious. In losing her, I should lose a being who has run great risks on my account, and whom I have every reason to love—but I must not think this possible. I do not know what I *should* do if she died, but I ought to blow my brains out—and I hope that I should. Her husband is a very polite personage, but I wish he would not carry me out in his Coach and Six, like Whittington and his Cat.

You ask me if I mean to continue *D. J.*, etc. How should I know? what encouragement do you give me, all of you, with your nonsensical prudery? publish the two Cantos, and then you will see. I desired Mr. Kinnaird to speak to you on a little matter of business; either he has not spoken, or you have not answered. You are a pretty pair, but I will be even with you both. I perceive that Mr. Hobhouse has been challenged by Major

> Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
> Rooted where once the Adrian wave flow'd o'er,
> To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,
> Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore
> And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me,
> How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!"
>
> *Don Juan*, Canto III. stanza cv.

Dryden's "Theodore and Honoria" (*Works*, Scott's edition, vol. xi. pp. 433–451) is based on the story told by Philomena in the *Decameron*, of Anastasio and the daughter of Paolo Traversaro (Day 5, Novel 8). Theodore, Honoria's lover, is repulsed by her. He leaves Ravenna for Chassis (Chiassi), and there, wandering at early morning among the pines, he sees a maiden pursued through "briers "and brambles" by "two mastiffs gaunt and grim," and "a "knight of swarthy face—high on a coal-black steed." The knight is Guido Cavalcanti, who, in despair at his spurned love, killed himself, and now is "damned in hell." The hunted maiden is the cruel damsel, who, at her death, is condemned to be daily pursued by the spectral Guido and the ghostly hounds. Honoria, taken to see the spectacle, relents, and confesses her love for Theodore.



Digitized by Google

Cartwright[1]—Is the Major "so cunning of fence?"[2] why did not they fight?—they ought.

Yours ever truly,

B.

Address your answer to *Venice* as usual.

## 742.—To James Wedderburn Webster.

Ravenna, July 2d 1819.

DEAR WEBSTER,—Your letter followed me to this city, where I have been some time. A friend of mine

1. John Cartwright (1740–1824) left the navy, in which he had gained distinction, because his sympathy with the cause of American independence prevented him from serving against the United States. He became a major in the Nottinghamshire Militia, when the regiment was first raised (1775?); but his commission was cancelled—illegally, as he endeavoured to prove in a *Letter to the Duke of Newcastle*—on account of his attendance at a public meeting to celebrate the fall of the Bastille. He worked with extraordinary energy in the cause of Parliamentary Reform, advocating it by pamphlets and larger works, by the establishment of the Society for Constitutional Information, by speeches and by correspondence. His remedies for the political evils of the day were annual parliaments, universal suffrage, and the ballot. On June 18, 1818, he was, with Sir S. Romilly, Sir F. Burdett, Sir M. Maxwell, Kinnaird, and Hunt, nominated as a candidate for Westminster. Cartwright seems to have objected to the payment of money for the expenses of an election, and this, as much, perhaps, as his advanced political views, accounts for his never obtaining a seat in Parliament. The challenge arose out of the Westminster election of March, 1819, when Hobhouse was defeated, owing, as he believed, to Cobbett, Hunt, and Major Cartwright supporting George Lamb, the official Whig candidate. Major Cartwright, "conceiving that he was "treated with unmerited disrespect, expressed himself in terms which "showed that the honour of the veteran was not to be attacked "with impunity. An explanation, however, took place, highly "creditable to the good feeling and candour of the younger can- "didate, and a friendly acquaintance afterwards subsisted between "them" (Miss F. D. Cartwright's *Life and Correspondence of Major Cartwright*, vol. ii. p. 161).

2. "*Sir Andrew Ague-cheek.* Plague on't; an I thought he had "been valiant and so cunning in fence, I'd have seen him damned "ere I'd have challenged him."—*Twelfth Night*, act iii. sc. 4.

Digitized by Google

—the young Countess Guiccioli—is very unwell, and I came down from Venice to see her about a month ago. The poor Girl, who is but twenty years old, and has been married about fifteen months to a very rich nobleman of Ravenna (she is his third wife, and he is sixty), has had a bad miscarriage, and her symptoms threaten Consumption, but I hope better.

If you write to me address to Venice; my letters will be forwarded.

I answered you before about the bond, and do not know that I need say more upon the subject. I presume nobody has called upon you on my part for payment.

Newstead was sold and the purchase-money paid.

I regret that the tone of your letter is so desponding, and my own spirits at this moment are not in a state to reply to you very cheerfully. The accounts you have heard of the alteration which has taken place in my appearance may be true; it would be odd indeed if some change had not occurred. Mine has not been the most regular, nor the most tranquil, of lives. At thirty I feel there is no more to look forward to. With regard to the imputed "Corpulence"—my size is certainly increased considerably; but I am not aware that it amounts to that "Stupendous" degree which you enquire after. At eight and twenty I was as thin as most men, and I believe that hitherto I have not exceeded the decent standard—of my time of life. However, my personal charms have by no means increased; my hair is half grey, and the Crow's-foot has been rather lavish of its indelible steps. My hair, though not gone, seems going, and my teeth remain by way of courtesy; but I suppose they will follow, having been too good to last. I have now been as candid as anything but a too faithful Mirror

Digitized by Google

can be. I shall not venture to look in mine, for fear of adding to the list of that which Time has [added] [1]—and is adding.

I regret that you do not pass into Italy—for my sake, because we should meet—and for yours, because it must be better than a provincial town of France.[2] *Here* all the cities are capitals, and have not that provincial tone of the secondary towns of other kingdoms. If you were on this side of the Alps I would go a good way to meet you. Why don't you come? I really wish you would, or could.

Yours ever and truly,

B^n^.

To-morrow I have to undergo a presentation to the Cardinal Legate of the district, and I am not fond of introductions.

P.S.—My best remembrances to Lady Frances.

## 743.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Ravenna, July 2, 1819.

Thanks for your letter and for Madame's. I will answer it directly. Will you recollect whether I did not consign to you one or two receipts of Madame Mocenigo's for house-rent—(I am not sure of this, but think I did—if not, they will be in my drawers)—and will you desire Mr. Dorville[3] to have the goodness to see if Edgecombe has *receipts* to all payments *hitherto* made by him on my account, and that there are *no debts* at

1. Word torn by the seal.

2. Webster was now living at Nantes, where he seems to have had a printing-press. See his *Genealogical Account of the Wedderburn Family: printed at the author's Private Press at Nantes*, 1819, 8vo.

3. The Vice-Consul of Venice.

Digitized by Google

Venice? On your answer, I shall send order of further remittance to carry on my household expenses, as my present return to Venice is very problematical; and it may happen—but I can say nothing positive—every thing with me being indecisive and undecided, except the disgust which Venice excites when fairly compared with any other city in this part of Italy. When I say *Venice*, I mean the *Venetians*—the city itself is superb as its history—but the people are what I never thought them till they taught me to think so.

The best way will be to leave Allegra with Antonio's spouse till I can decide something about her and myself—but I thought that you would have had an answer from Mrs. V[avassou]r.[1] You have had bore enough with me and mine already.

I greatly fear that the Guiccioli is going into a consumption, to which her constitution tends. Thus it is with every thing and every body for whom I feel any thing like a real attachment;—"War, death, or discord, "doth lay siege to them."[2] I never even could keep alive a dog that I liked or that liked me. Her symptoms are obstinate cough of the lungs, and occasional fever, etc., etc., and there are latent causes of an eruption in the skin, which she foolishly repelled into the system two years ago: but I have made them send her case to Aglietti; and have begged him to

1. An English widow lady, of considerable property in the north of England, who saw Allegra at Hoppner's, took an interest in her fate, and, having no family of her own, offered to adopt her, if Byron would renounce all claim to his daughter. The proposed arrangement was never carried into effect.

2. "Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it."
*A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, act i. sc. 1.

Digitized by Google

come—if only for a day or two—to consult upon her state. * * *

If it would not bore Mr. Dorville, I wish he would keep an eye on E[dgcumbe] and on my other ragamuffins. I might have more to say, but I am absorbed about La Gui. and her illness. I cannot tell you the effect it has upon me.

The horses came, etc., etc., and I have been galloping through the pine forest daily.

Believe me, etc.

P.S.—My benediction on Mrs. Hoppner, a pleasant journey among the Bernese tyrants, and safe return. You ought to bring back a Platonic Bernese for my reformation. If any thing happens to my present *Amica*, I have done with the passion for ever—it is my *last* love. As to libertinism, I have sickened myself of that, as was natural in the way I went on, and I have at least derived that advantage from vice, to *love* in the better sense of the word. *This* will be my last adventure—I can hope no more to inspire attachment, and I trust never again to feel it.

## 744.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, August 1, 1819.

[Address your answer to Venice, however.]

DEAR SIR,—Don't be alarmed. You will see me defend myself gaily—that is, if I happen to be in Spirits; and by *Spirits*, I don't mean your meaning of the word, but the spirit of a bull-dog when pinched, or a bull when pinned—it is then that they make best sport—and as my Sensations under an attack are probably a happy

Digitized by Google

compound of the united energies of those amiable animals, you may perhaps see what Marrall calls "rare "sport,"[1] and some good tossing and goring, in the course of the controversy. But I must be in the right cue first, and I doubt I am almost too far off to be in a sufficient fury for the purpose; and then I have effeminated and enervated myself with love and the summer in these last two months.

I wrote to Mr. Hobhouse the other day, and foretold that Juan would either fail entirely or succeed completely —there will be no medium: appearances are not favourable; but as you write the day after publication, it can hardly be decided what opinion will predominate. You seem in a fright, and doubtless with cause. Come what may, I never will flatter the million's canting in any shape: circumstances may or may not have placed me at times in a situation to lead the public opinion, but the public opinion never led, nor ever shall lead, me. I will not sit "on a degraded throne;" so pray put Messrs. Southey, or Sotheby, or Tom Moore, or Horace Twiss upon it—they will all of them be transported with their coronation.

You have bought Harlow's drawings[2] of Margarita

1. In Massinger's *New Way to Pay Old Debts* (act v. sc. 1) Sir Giles Overreach curses his daughter Margaret—

> "And if I make not
> This house a heap of ashes, (by my wrongs,
> What I have spoke I will make good!) or leave
> One throat uncut,—if it be possible,
> Hell, add to my afflictions!
> "*Marrall.* Is't not brave sport?"

2. George Henry Harlow (1787–1819), excellent as a portrait-painter in the style of Lawrence, but less successful in historical painting, visited Italy in 1818. He died shortly after his return to England, February 4, 1819. (See Medwin's *Conversations*, pp. 102, 103.)

Digitized by Google

and me rather dear methinks; but since you desire the story of Margarita Cogni, you shall be told it, though it may be lengthy.

Her face is of the fine Venetian cast of the old Time, and her figure, though perhaps too tall, not less fine—taken altogether in the national dress.

In the summer of 1817, Hobhouse and myself were sauntering on horseback along the Brenta one evening, when, amongst a group of peasants, we remarked two girls as the prettiest we had seen for some time. About this period, there had been great distress in the country, and I had a little relieved some of the people. Generosity makes a great figure at very little cost in Venetian livres, and mine had probably been exaggerated—as an Englishman's. Whether they remarked us looking at them or no, I know not; but one of them called out to me in Venetian, "Why do not you, who relieve others, think "of us also?" I turned round and answered her—"*Cara, tu sei troppo bella e giovane per aver' bisogno* "*del' soccorso mio.*" She answered, "If you saw my "hut and my food, you would not say so." All this passed half jestingly, and I saw no more of her for some days.

A few evenings after, we met with these two girls again, and they addressed us more seriously, assuring us of the truth of their statement. They were cousins; Margarita married, the other single. As I doubted still of the circumstances, I took the business up in a different light, and made an appointment with them for the next evening. Hobhouse had taken a fancy to the single lady, who was much shorter in stature, but a very pretty girl also. They came attended by a third woman, who was cursedly in the way, and Hobhouse's charmer took fright (I don't mean at Hobhouse, but at not being

Digitized by Google

married—for here no woman will do anything under adultery), and flew off; and mine made some bother—at the propositions, and wished to consider of them. I told her, "if you really are in want, I will relieve you without "any conditions whatever, and you may make love with "me or no just as you please—*that* shall make no differ- "ence; but if you are not in absolute necessity, this is "naturally a rendezvous, and I presumed that you under- "stood this when you made the appointment." She said that she had no objection to make love with me, as she was married, and all married women did it: but that her husband (a baker) was somewhat ferocious, and would do her a mischief. In short, in a few evenings we arranged our affairs, and for two years, in the course of which I had more women than I can count or recount, she was the only one who preserved over me an ascend- ancy which was often disputed, and never impaired. As she herself used to say publicly, "It don't matter, he "may have five hundred; but he will always come back "to me."

The reasons of this were, firstly, her person—very dark, tall, the Venetian face, very fine black eyes—and certain other qualities which need not be mentioned. She was two and twenty years old, and, never having had children, had not spoilt her figure * * * * * * * * * She was, besides, a thorough Venetian in her dialect, in her thoughts, in her countenance, in every thing, with all their naïveté and Pantaloon humour. Besides, she could neither read nor write, and could not plague me with letters,—except twice that she paid sixpence to a public scribe, under the piazza, to make a letter for her, upon some occasion, when I was ill and could not see her. In other respects she was somewhat fierce and *prepotente*, that is, overbearing,

Digitized by Google

and used to walk in whenever it suited her, with no very great regard to time, place, nor persons; and if she found any women in her way, she knocked them down.

When I first knew her, I was in *relasione* (*liaison*) with la Signora Segati, who was silly enough one evening at Dolo, accompanied by some of her female friends, to threaten her; for the Gossips of the Villeggiatura had already found out, by the neighing of my horse one evening, that I used to "ride late in the night" to meet the Fornarina. Margarita threw back her veil (*fassiolo*), and replied in very explicit Venetian, "*You* are *not* his *wife*: "*I* am *not* his *wife*: *you* are his *Donna*, and *I* am his "*Donna*: *your* husband is a cuckold, and *mine* is another. "For the rest, what *right* have you to reproach me? if he "prefers what is mine to what is yours, is it my fault? "if you wish to secure him, tie him to your petticoat-"string; but do not think to speak to me without a reply, "because you happen to be richer than I am." Having delivered this pretty piece of eloquence (which I translate as it was related to me by a bye-stander), she went on her way, leaving a numerous audience with Madame Segati, to ponder at her leisure on the dialogue between them.

When I came to Venice for the Winter, she followed. I never had any regular *liaison* with her, but whenever she came I never allowed any other connection to interfere with her; and as she found herself out to be a favourite, she came pretty often. But she had inordinate Self-love, and was not tolerant of other women, except of the Segati, who was, as she said, my regular *Amica*, so that I, being at that time somewhat promiscuous, there was great confusion and demolition of head-dresses and handkerchiefs; and sometimes my servants, in

Digitized by Google

"redding[1] the fray" between her and other feminine persons, received more knocks than acknowledgements for their peaceful endeavours. At the *Cavalchina*, the masqued ball on the last night of the Carnival, where all the World goes, she snatched off the mask of Madame Contarini, a lady noble by birth, and decent in conduct, for no other reason, but because she happened to be leaning on my arm. You may suppose what a cursed noise this made; but this is only one of her pranks.

At last she quarrelled with her husband, and one evening ran away to my house. I told her this would not do: she said she would lie in the street, but not go back to him; that he beat her (the gentle tigress), spent her money, and scandalously neglected his Oven. As it was Midnight I let her stay, and next day there was no moving her at all. Her husband came, roaring and crying, and entreating her to come back:—*not* she! He then applied to the Police, and they applied to me: I told them and her husband to *take* her; I did not want her; she had come, and I could not fling her out of the window; but they might conduct her through that or the door if they chose it. She went before the Commissary, but was obliged to return with that *becco ettico* ("consumptive cuckold"), as she called the poor man, who had a Ptisick. In a few days she ran away again. After a precious piece of work, she fixed herself in my house, really and truly without my consent, but, owing to my indolence, and not being able to keep my countenance;

1. "The redder gets aye the warst lick in the fray" (*Old Mortality*, chap. iv.).
"'And it was a shame,' said Ensign Maccombich, . . . 'for "that Tibbert, or Taggart, or whatever was his name, to stick him "under the other gentleman's arm while he was redding the fray'" (*Waverley*, chap. liv.).

Digitized by Google

for if I began in a rage, she always finished by making me laugh with some Venetian pantaloonery or another; and the Gipsy knew this well enough, as well as her other powers of persuasion, and exerted them with the usual tact and success of all She-things—high and low, they are all alike for that.

Madame Benzone also took her under her protection, and then her head turned. She was always in extremes, either crying or laughing; and so fierce when angered, that she was the terror of men, women, and children—for she had the strength of an Amazon, with the temper of Medea. She was a fine animal, but quite untameable. *I* was the only person that could at all keep her in any order, and when she saw me really angry (which they tell me is rather a savage sight), she subsided. But she had a thousand fooleries: in her *fassiolo*, the dress of the lower orders, she looked beautiful; but, alas! she longed for a hat and feathers, and all I could say or do (and I said much) could not prevent this travestie. I put the first into the fire; but I got tired of burning them, before she did of buying them, so that she made herself a figure —for they did not at all become her.

Then she would have her gowns with a *tail*—like a lady, forsooth: nothing would serve her but "*l'abito colla "coua*," or *cua*, (that is the Venetian for "*la Coda*," the tail or train,) and as her cursed pronunciation of the word made me laugh, there was an end of all controversy, and she dragged this diabolical tail after her every where.

In the mean time, she beat the women and stopped my letters. I found her one day pondering over one: she used to try to find out by their shape whether they were feminine or no; and she used to lament her ignorance, and actually studied her Alphabet, on purpose (as

Digitized by Google

she declared) to open all letters addressed to me and read their contents.

I must not omit to do justice to her housekeeping qualities: after she came into my house as *donna di governo*, the expences were reduced to less than half, and every body did their duty better—the apartments were kept in order, and every thing and every body else, except herself.

That she had a sufficient regard for me in her wild way, I had many reasons to believe. I will mention one. In the autumn, one day, going to the Lido with my Gondoliers, we were overtaken by a heavy Squall, and the Gondola put in peril—hats blown away, boat filling, oar lost, tumbling sea, thunder, rain in torrents, night coming, and wind encreasing. On our return, after a tight struggle, I found her on the open steps of the Mocenigo palace, on the Grand Canal, with her great black eyes flashing through her tears, and the long dark hair, which was streaming drenched with rain over her brows and breast. She was perfectly exposed to the storm; and the wind blowing her hair and dress about her tall thin figure, and the lightning flashing round her, with the waves rolling at her feet, made her look like Medea alighted from her chariot, or the Sibyl of the tempest that was rolling around her, the only living thing within hail at that moment except ourselves. On seeing me safe, she did not wait to greet me, as might be expected, but calling out to me—*Ah! can' della Madonna, xe esto il tempo per andar' al' Lido?* (Ah! Dog of the Virgin, is this a time to go to Lido?) ran into the house, and solaced herself with scolding the boatmen for not foreseeing the "*temporale*." I was told by the servants that she had only been prevented from coming in a boat to look after me, by the refusal of all the Gondoliers of

Digitized by Google

the Canal to put out into the harbour in such a moment: and that then she sate down on the steps in all the thickest of the Squall, and would neither be removed nor comforted. Her joy at seeing me again was moderately mixed with ferocity, and gave me the idea of a tigress over her recovered Cubs.

But her reign drew near a close. She became quite ungovernable some months after; and a concurrence of complaints, some true, and many false—"a favourite has "no friend"[1]—determined me to part with her. I told her quietly that she must return home, (she had acquired a sufficient provision for herself and mother, etc., in my service,) and She refused to quit the house. I was firm, and she went, threatening knives and revenge. I told her that I had seen knives drawn before her time, and that if she chose to begin, there was a knife, and fork also, at her service on the table, and that intimidation would not do. The next day, while I was at dinner, she walked in, (having broke open a glass door that led from the hall below to the staircase, by way of prologue,) and, advancing strait up to the table, snatched the knife from my hand, cutting me slightly in the thumb in the operation. Whether she meant to use this against herself or me, I know not—probably against neither—but Fletcher seized her by the arms, and disarmed her. I then called my boatmen, and desired them to get the Gondola ready, and conduct her to her own house again, seeing carefully that she did herself no mischief by the way. She seemed quite quiet, and walked down stairs. I resumed my dinner.

We heard a great noise: I went out, and met them on the staircase, carrying her up stairs. She had thrown herself into the Canal. That she intended to destroy

1. Gray's lines "On the Death of a Favourite Cat."

Digitized by Google

herself, I do not believe; but when we consider the fear women and men who can't swim have of deep or even of shallow water, (and the Venetians in particular, though they live on the waves,) and that it was also night, and dark, and very cold, it shows that she had a devilish spirit of some sort within her. They had got her out without much difficulty or damage, excepting the salt water she had swallowed, and the wetting she had undergone.

I foresaw her intention to refix herself, and sent for a Surgeon, enquiring how many hours it would require to restore her from her agitation; and he named the time. I then said, "I give you that time, "and more if you require it; but at the expiration of "the prescribed period, if *She* does not leave the house, "*I* will."

All my people were consternated—they had always been frightened at her, and were now paralyzed: they wanted me to apply to the police, to guard myself, etc., etc., like a pack of sniveling servile boobies as they were. I did nothing of the kind, thinking that I might as well end that way as another; besides, I had been used to savage women, and knew their ways.

I had her sent home quietly after her recovery, and never saw her since, except twice at the opera, at a distance amongst the audience. She made many attempts to return, but no more violent ones. And this is the story of Margarita Cogni, as far as it belongs to me.

I forgot to mention that she was very devout, and would cross herself if she heard the prayer-time strike —sometimes when that ceremony did not appear to be much in unison with what she was then about.

She was quick in reply; as, for instance—One day

Digitized by Google

when she had made me very angry with beating somebody or other, I called her a *Cow* (*Cow*, in Italian, is a sad affront and tantamount to the feminine of dog in English). I called her "*Vacca*." She turned round, curtesied, and answered, "*Vacca tua, 'Celenza*" (*i.e. Eccelenza*). "*Your* Cow, please your Excellency." In short, she was, as I said before, a very fine Animal, of considerable beauty and energy, with many good and several amusing qualities, but wild as a witch and fierce as a demon. She used to boast publicly of her ascendancy over me, contrasting it with that of other women, and assigning for it sundry reasons, physical and moral, which did more credit to her person than her modesty. True it was, that they all tried to get her away, and no one succeeded till her own absurdity helped them. Whenever there was a competition, and sometimes one would be shut in one room and one in another to prevent battle, she had generally the preference.

Yours very truly and affectionately,

B.

P.S.—The Countess G[uiccioli] is much better than she was. I sent you, before leaving Venice, a letter containing the real original sketch which gave rise to the *Vampire*, etc.: did you get it?

## 745.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, August 9, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote a long letter in answer to yours of the 16th July the other day, giving you an account of Margarita Cogni, as you wished. But I omitted to tell you her answer when I reproached her for snatching

Digitized by Google

Madame Contarini's mask at the Cavalchina. I represented to her that she was a lady of high birth, "*una* "*dama*," etc. She answered, "*Se Ella è dama, mi* (*io*) "*son' Veneziana*"—"If she is a lady, I am a Venetian." This would have been fine a hundred years ago—the pride of the nation rising up against the pride of Aristocracy: but, alas! Venice, and her people, and her nobles, are alike returning fast to the Ocean; and where there is no independence, there can be no real self-respect.

I believe that I mistook or misstated one of her phrases in my letter: it should have been—"*Can' della* "*Madonna! cosa vus' tu? Esto non è tempo par andar' a* "*Lido.*" I do not remember how I had worded it, but have a general idea of having blundered.

Talking of blunders reminds me of Ireland—Ireland of Moore. What is this I see in Galignani about "Bermuda—Agent—deputy—appeal—attachment," etc.? what is the matter? is it anything in which his friends can be of use to him? Pray inform me.

Of *Don Juan* I hear nothing further from *you*—you chicken-hearted, silver-paper Stationer, you! But the papers don't seem so fierce as the letter you sent seemed to anticipate, by their extracts at least in *Galignani's Messenger*. I never saw such a set of fellows as you are: and then the pains taken to exculpate the modest publisher—he had remonstrated, forsooth! I will write a preface that *shall* exculpate *you* and Hobhouse, etc., completely, on that point; but, at the same time, I will cut you all up (and *you* in particular), like Gourds. You have no more soul than the Count de Caylus[1] (who

1. Anne Claude Philippe de Tubières, Comte de Caylus (1692–1765), began life as a soldier, but after the Peace of Rastadt (1714), which closed the War of the Spanish Succession, he gave himself up



Digitized by Google

assured his friends, on his death-bed, that he had none, and that *he* must know better than they whether he had one or no,) and no more blood than a Water-Melon! And I see there hath been asterisks, and what Perry used to call "d*o*mned cutting and slashing." But, never mind.

I write in haste—tomorrow I set off for Bologna—I write to you with thunder, lightning, etc., and all the winds of heaven whistling through my hair, and the racket of preparation to boot. My "Mistress dear," who hath "fed my heart upon smiles and wine"[1] for the last two months, set off for Bologna with her husband this morning, and it seems that I follow him at three to-morrow morning. I cannot tell how our romance will end, but it hath gone on hitherto most

to travelling, literature, and archæology, especially on its artistic side. His numerous writings range from fairy stories, novels, Eastern tales (*Œuvres badines du Comte de Caylus*, 12 vols., 8vo, Paris, 1787), to works on papyri, ancient coins or paintings, lives of painters, and memoirs on encaustic tiles. The story to which Byron alludes is told in Grimm's *Correspondance Littéraire* (Première Partie, tom. v., Sept^re^, 1765, p. 11): "Le Comte de Caylus "avait une belle et franche aversion pour les médecins et pour les "prêtres, et il est mort sans tomber entre les mains ni des uns ni "des autres. Il avait été anciennement attaqué d'une maladie "dangereuse, dans le temps que son oncle, le célèbre évêque "d'Auxerre, janséniste, vivait encore. Ce prélat et tous ses parens "étaient autour de son lit, et cherchaient une tournure pour lui "proposer les sacremens. Je vois bien, leur dit le malade, que "vous voulez me parler pour le bien de mon âme . . . Tout le "monde se sentit soulagé à ces mots . . . Mais, continua-t-il, je "vais vous dire mon secret, c'est que je n'en ai point . . . et "l'évêque et toutes les parentes dévotes de reculer d'horreur, et "de se signer; mais, malgré toutes leurs exhortations, le malade "les assurait toujours qu'il n'avait point d'âme, et qu'il devait le "savoir mieux qu'un autre. Dans le cours de sa dernière maladie," etc., etc.

1. "When in death I shall calm recline,
Oh, bear my heart to my mistress dear;
Tell her it lived upon smiles and wine
Of the brightest hue, while it linger'd here."
*Irish Melodies.*

Digitized by Google

erotically—such perils and escapes—Juan's are a child's play in comparison. The fools think that all my *Poeshie* is always allusive to my *own* adventures: I have had at one time or another better and more extraordinary and perilous and pleasant than these, any day of the week, if I might tell them; but that must never be.

I hope Mrs. M. has accouched.

Yours ever,

B.

## 746.—To John Murray.

Bologna, August 12, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I do not know how far I may be able to reply to your letter, for I am not very well to-day. Last night I went to the representation of Alfieri's *Mirra*,[1]

1. Mirra, in Alfieri's play, is the daughter of Ciniro, King of Cyprus, and his wife Cecri. About to be married to Pereo, Prince of Epirus, she is, for some unknown reason, miserable at the prospect. But Cecri confesses to her husband that, in her joy at the possession of such a daughter, she had once refused incense to Venus, and had even boasted that Mirra was more beautiful than the goddess. Ciniro decides to hasten the wedding, and the rites begin. Suddenly Mirra, seized with frenzy, declares that the Furies have taken possession of her. Pereo breaks off the wedding, rushes away, and commits suicide. In act v. sc. 2 Ciniro tells his daughter of the death of Pereo, and implores her to tell him whom she really loves, promising that he will consent to the union. Mirra at length confesses that the man she loves is Ciniro himself. Scarcely has the confession escaped her lips, than she kills herself with her father's dagger. Her love for her father is the punishment of Venus. The play is suggested by Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (lib. x.), where Myrrha becomes the mother of Adonis by her father. Alfieri (*Vita di Vittorio Alfieri Da Asti, scritto da esso*, ed. 1809, vol. ii. p. 121) says that Ovid's story made him burst into tears, "e quasi un subitaneo lampo mi destò l' idea di porla in "tragedia." The play is dedicated to the Countess Louisa Stolberg of Albany.

The *Dama*, in whose company Byron witnessed this representation, thus describes its effect upon him: "Gli attori, e specialmente

Digitized by Google

the two last acts of which threw me into convulsions. I do not mean by that word a lady's hysterics, but the agony of reluctant tears, and the choaking shudder, which I do not often undergo for fiction. This is but the second time for anything under reality; the first was on seeing Kean's Sir Giles Overreach.[1] The worst was, that the "*dama*," in whose box I was, went off in the same way, I really believe more from fright than any other sympathy—at least with the players: but she has been ill, and I have been ill, and we are all languid and pathetic this morning, with great expenditure of

"l' attrice che rappresentava Mirra secondava assai bene la mente "del nostro grande tragico. L. B. prese molto interesse alla rap- "presentazione, e si conosceva che era molto commesso. Venne "un punto poi della tragedia in cui non potè più frenare la sua "emozione,—diede in un diretto pianto e i singhiozzi gl' impedirono "di più restare nel palco; onde si levò, e partì dal teatro. In uno "stato simile lo viddi un altra volta a Ravenna ad una rappre- "sentazione del *Filippo* d'Alfieri."—"The play was that of *Mirra;* "the actors, and particularly the actress who performed the part of "Mirra, seconded with much success the intentions of our great "dramatist. Lord Byron took a strong interest in the representa- "tion, and it was evident that he was deeply affected. At length "there came a point of the performance at which he could no "longer restrain his emotions:—he burst into a flood of tears, "and, his sobs preventing him from remaining any longer in the "box, he rose and left the theatre.—I saw him similarly affected "another time during a representation of Alfieri's *Philip*, at "Ravenna."

The play produced a great effect on Matthews, who says, "Went in "the evening to the theatre, where Alfieri's tragedy, *Mirra*, was "performed. I have seldom seen a tragedy where the distress is "more affecting. The actress who played Mirra did it to the life: "her first entrance told the whole story of the play; and the part "is so managed, as to excite pity and sympathy for Mirra, in "spite of the odious passion of which she is the victim. If terror "and pity be the objects of tragedy, the part is admirably contrived "to excite both these feelings in the highest degree; for, while "you shudder at the terrible workings and fearful energy of her "passion, the struggles of her own native innocence of mind and "the horror with which she regards herself make the strongest "appeal to your compassion."—*Diary of an Invalid*, p. 282, ed. 1835.

1. In *A New Way to Pay Old Debts.*

Digitized by Google

Sal Volatile. But, to return to your letter of the 23d of July.

You are right, Gifford is right, Crabbe is right, Hobhouse is right—you are all right, and I am all wrong; but do, pray, let me have that pleasure. Cut me up root and branch; quarter me in the *Quarterly*; send round my *disjecti membra poetæ*, like those of the Levite's Concubine; make me, if you will, a spectacle to men and angels; but don't ask me to alter, for I can't:—I am obstinate and lazy—and there's the truth.

But, nevertheless, I will answer your friend C[ohen],[1] who objects to the quick succession of fun and gravity, as if in that case the gravity did not (in intention, at least) heighten the fun. His metaphor is, that "we are "never scorched and drenched at the same time." Blessings on his experience! Ask him these questions about "scorching and drenching." Did he never play at Cricket, or walk a mile in hot weather? Did he never spill a dish of tea over himself in handing the cup to his charmer, to the great shame of his nankeen breeches? Did he never swim in the sea at Noonday with the Sun in his eyes and on his head, which all the foam of Ocean could not cool? Did he never draw his foot out of

1. Francis Cohen (1788–1861) assumed in 1823 the maiden name of his mother-in-law, Palgrave, and embraced Christianity. An admirable Italian scholar, he translated for Byron a passage from the *Cronica di Sanuto* in Appendices I. and II. to *Marino Faliero*. "I am obliged," writes Byron, in a note to Appendix II., "for this "excellent translation of the old Chronicle to Mr. F. Cohen, to "whom the reader will find himself indebted for a version that I "could not myself (after many years' intercourse with Italian) "have given by any means so purely and so faithfully." A frequent contributor to the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews*, a great mediæval historian, a bold and suggestive inquirer into the origins of the British Constitution, Palgrave was knighted in 1832, and became Deputy-Keeper of Her Majesty's Records in 1838.

Digitized by Google

a tub of too hot water, damning his eyes and his valet's? * * * * * Was he ever in a Turkish bath, that marble paradise of sherbet and Sodomy? Was he ever in a cauldron of boiling oil, like St. John? or in the sulphureous waves of hell? (where he ought to be for his "scorching "and drenching at the same time"). Did he never tumble into a river or lake, fishing, and sit in his wet cloathes in the boat, or on the bank, afterwards "scorched and drenched," like a true sportsman? "Oh "for breath to utter!"[1]—but make him my compliments; he is a clever fellow for all that—a very clever fellow.

You ask me for the plan of Donny Johnny: I *have* no plan—I *had* no plan; but I had or have materials; though if, like Tony Lumpkin,[2] I am "to be snubbed so "when I am in spirits," the poem will be naught, and the poet turn serious again. If it don't take, I will leave it off where it is, with all due respect to the Public; but if continued, it must be in my own way. You might as well make Hamlet (or Diggory)[3] "act mad" in a strait waistcoat as trammel my buffoonery, if I am to be a buffoon: their gestures and my thoughts would only be pitiably absurd and ludicrously constrained. Why, Man, the Soul of such writing is its licence; at least the *liberty* of that *licence*, if one likes—*not* that one should abuse it: it is like trial by Jury and Peerage and the Habeas Corpus—a very fine thing, but chiefly in the *reversion*; because no one wishes to be tried for the mere pleasure of proving his possession of the privilege.

1. *Henry IV.*, Part I. act ii. sc. 4.
2. In *She Stoops to Conquer* (act ii.) Tony Lumpkin says, "I "wish you'd let me and my good alone, then—snubbing this way "when I'm in spirits."
3. "Diggery" is the stage-struck servant at Strawberry Hall, in Jackman's farce of *All the World's a Stage*.

Digitized by Google

But a truce with these reflections. You are too earnest and eager about a work never intended to be serious. Do you suppose that I could have any intention but to giggle and make giggle?—a playful satire, with as little poetry as could be helped, was what I meant: and as to the indecency, do, pray, read in Boswell what *Johnson*, the sullen moralist, says of *Prior* and Paulo Purgante.[1]

Will you get a favour done for me? *You* can, by your Government friends, Croker,[2] Canning, or my old Schoolfellow Peel, and I can't. Here it is. Will you ask them to appoint (*without salary or emolument*) a noble Italian (whom I will name afterwards) Consul or Vice-Consul for Ravenna? He is a man of very large property,—noble, too; but he wishes to have a British protection, in case of changes. Ravenna is near the sea. He wants *no emolument* whatever: that his office might be useful, I know; as I lately sent off from Ravenna to Trieste a poor devil of an English Sailor, who had remained there sick, sorry, and penniless (having been set ashore in 1814), from the want of any accredited agent able or willing to help him homewards. Will you get this done? It will be the greatest favour to me. If you do, I will then send his name and condition,

1. "I asked whether Prior's Poems were to be printed entire; "Johnson said they were. . . . 'There is nothing in Prior that will "excite to lewdness. If Lord Hailes thinks there is, he must be "more combustible than other people.' I instanced the tale of "*Paulo Purganti and his Wife*. Johnson: 'Sir, there is nothing "there, but that his wife wanted to be kissed when poor Paulo was "out of pocket. No, sir, Prior is a lady's book. No lady is "ashamed to have it standing in her library'" (Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, ed. Hill, vol. iii. p. 192).

The Poem of "Paulo Purganti and his Wife; an honest but a "simple Pair" will be found in Johnson's *English Poets*.

2. Byron wrote on behalf of Count Guiccioli. (See *The Correspondence and Diaries of John Wilson Croker*, vol. i. p. 144.)

Digitized by Google

subject, of course, to rejection, if *not* approved when known.

I know that in the Levant you make consuls and Vice-Consuls, perpetually, of foreigners. This man is a Patrician, and has twelve thousand a year. His motive is a British protection in case of new Invasions. Don't you think Croker would do it for us? To be sure, *my interest* is rare!! but, perhaps a brother-wit in the Tory line might do a good turn at the request of so harmless and long absent a Whig, particularly as there is no *salary* nor *burthen* of any sort to be annexed to the office.

I can assure you, I should look upon it as a great obligation; but, alas! that very circumstance may, very probably, operate to the contrary—indeed, it ought. But I have, at least, been an honest and an open enemy. Amongst your many splendid Government Connections, could not you, think you, get our Bibulus[1] made a Consul? Or make me one, that I may make him my Vice. You may be assured that, in case of accidents in Italy, he would be no feeble adjunct—as you would think if you knew his property.

What is all this about Tom Moore? but why do I ask? since the state of my own affairs would not permit me to be of use to him, although they are greatly improved since 1816, and may, with some more luck and a little prudence, become quite Clear. It seems his Claimants are *American* merchants? *There* goes *Nemesis!* Moore abused America. It is always thus in the long run:—Time, the Avenger. You have seen every trampler down, in turn, from Buonaparte to the

1. Bibulus was Curule Ædile with Julius Cæsar, B.C. 65; Prætor with him, B.C. 62; Consul with him, B.C. 59. Yet he was one of Cæsar's chief opponents.

Digitized by Google

simplest individuals. You saw how some were avenged even upon my insignificance, and how in turn Romilly paid for his atrocity. It is an odd World; but the Watch has its mainspring, after all.

So the Prince has been repealing Lord Ed. Fitzgerald's forfeiture?[1] *Ecco un' Sonnetto!*

To be the father of the fatherless,
To stretch the hand from the throne's height, and raise
*His* offspring, who expired in other days
To make thy Sire's Sway by a kingdom less,—
*This* is to be a Monarch, and repress
Envy into unutterable praise.
Dismiss thy Guard, and trust thee to such traits,
For who would lift a hand, except to bless?
Were it not easy, Sir, and is't not sweet
To make thyself beloved? and to be
Omnipotent by Mercy's means? for thus
Thy Sovereignty would grow but more complete,
A Despot thou, and yet thy people free,
And by the Heart, not Hand, enslaving us.

There, you dogs: there's a Sonnet for you: you won't have such as that in a hurry from Mr. Fitzgerald. You may publish it with my name, an ye wool. He deserves all praise, bad and good; it was a very noble piece of principality. Would you like an epigram—a translation?

1. Lord Edward FitzGerald (1763–1798), fifth son of the first Duke of Leinster, died in 1798 of a wound received in resisting an arrest upon a charge of high treason. He married, in December, 1792, Pamela, the adopted daughter of Madame de Genlis. His attainder was repealed in 1819. "If I had been a man," wrote Byron, in 1814 (*Letters*, vol. ii. p. 396), "I would have made an English "Lord Edward Fitzgerald."

Digitized by Google

If for silver, or for gold,
You could melt ten thousand pimples
Into half a dozen dimples,
Then your face we might behold,
Looking, doubtless, much more smugly,
Yet even then 'twould be damned ugly.

This was written on some Frenchwoman, by Rulhières, I believe. And so "good morrow t' ye, good "Master lieutenant."

Yours,
BYRON.

## 747.—To John Murray.

Bologna, August 23, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I send you a letter to Roberts,[1] signed "Wortley Clutterbuck," which you may publish in what

1. The letter to Roberts, editor of the *British Review*, originated in stanzas ccix.–ccx. of the First Canto of *Don Juan*—

"For fear some prudish readers should grow skittish,
I've bribed My Grandmother's Review,—the British!

"I sent it in a letter to the editor,
Who thank'd me duly by return of post—
I'm for a handsome article his creditor;
Yet if my gentle Muse he please to roast,
And break a promise after having made it her,
Denying the receipt of what it cost,
And smear his page with gall instead of honey,
All I can say is—that he had the money."

In a review of *Don Juan*, the *British Review* (No. xxviii. p. 267) says, "The strongest argument against the supposition of its being "the performance of Lord Byron is this;—that it can hardly be "possible for an English nobleman, even in his mirth, to send forth "to the public the direct and palpable falsehood contained in the "209th and 210th stanzas of the First Canto of this work." The reviewer goes on to say, "No misdemeanor—not even that of send-"ing into the world obscene and blasphemous poetry, the product "of 'studious lewdness' and 'laboured impiety'—appears to us "in so detestable a light as the acceptance of a *present* by an editor "of a Review, as the condition of praising an author; and yet the

Digitized by Google

form you please, in answer to his article. I have had many proofs of men's absurdity, but he beats all in folly. Why, the Wolf in sheep's cloathing has tumbled into the very trap. We'll strip him. The letter is written in great haste, and amidst a thousand vexations. Your letter only came yesterday, so that there is no time to polish: the post goes out tomorrow. The date is "Little "Pidlington." Let Hobhouse correct the press; he knows and can read the handwriting. Continue to keep the *anonymous* about *Juan;* it helps us to fight against overwhelming numbers. I have a thousand distractions at present—so excuse haste—and wonder I can act or write at all. Answer by post, as usual.

Yours,

B.

P.S.—If I had had time, and been quieter and nearer, I would have cut him to hash; but as it is, you can judge for yourselves.

" miserable man (for miserable he is, as having a soul of which he " cannot get rid), who has given birth to this pestilent poem, has " not scrupled to lay this to the charge of *The British Review;*" etc., etc. (For Byron's answer, see Appendix VII.)

William Roberts (1767–1849), called to the Bar in 1806, became editor of the *British Review* (1811–22), a periodical which advocated Tory and Evangelical principles. Through Weyland, the proprietor, he became the friend of William Wilberforce. The biographer of Hannah More (*Memoirs of Hannah More*, 1834) and of the Rev. Charles Bradley (*Portraiture of a Christian Gentleman*, 1829), he was throughout his life a prominent Evangelical. As a lawyer he gained some success, practising on the Home Circuit, writing legal works, and becoming successively (1812) Commissioner in Bankruptcy, and (1818) a Charity Commissioner. A strong Tory, he was deprived by the Whigs of the second appointment in 1831, and of the first in 1832.

Digitized by Google

## 748.—To John Murray.

Bologna, August 24, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you by last post, enclosing a buffooning letter for publication, addressed to the buffoon Roberts, who has thought proper to tie a cannister to his own tail. It was written off hand, and in the midst of circumstances not very favourable to facetiousness, so that there may, perhaps, be more bitterness than enough for that sort of small acid punch. You will tell me.

Keep the *anonymous*, in every case: it helps what fun there may be; but if the matter grows serious about *Don Juan*, and you feel *yourself* in a scrape, or *me* either, *own that I am the author. I* will never *shrink;* and if *you* do, I can always answer you in the question of Guatimozin to his minister—each being on his own coals.[1]

I wish that I had been in better spirits, but I am out of sorts, out of nerves; and now and then (I begin to fear) out of my senses. All this Italy has done for me, and not England: I defy all of you, and your climate to boot, to make me mad. But if ever I do really become a Bedlamite, and wear a strait waistcoat, let me be brought back among you; your people will then be proper compagny.

I assure you what I here say and feel has nothing

1. Guatimozin, tortured, with his chief favourite, by Cortes, in order to force from them a discovery of the royal treasures, bore the torments with fortitude: "but his fellow-sufferer, however, "overcome by the violence of the anguish, turned a dejected eye "towards his master, which seemed to implore his permission to "reveal all that he knew; but the high-spirited prince, darting on "him a look of authority, mingled with scorn, checked his weak-"ness by asking him, 'Am I now reposing on a bed of flowers?' "Overawed by the reproach, he persevered in his dutiful silence, "and expired" (Robertson's *History of America*, vol. ii. pp. 126, 127).

Digitized by Google

to do with England, either in a literary or personal point of view. All my present pleasures or plagues are as Italian as the Opera. And after all, they are but trifles, for all this arises from my *dama's* being in the country for three days (at Capofiume); but as I could never live for but one human being at a time, (and, I assure you, *that one* has never been *myself*, as you may know by the consequences, for the *Selfish* are *successful* in life,) I feel alone and unhappy.

I have sent for my daughter from Venice, and I ride daily, and walk in a Garden, under a purple canopy of grapes, and sit by a fountain, and talk with the Gardener of his toils, which seem greater than Adam's, and with his wife, and with his Son's wife, who is the youngest of the party, and, I think, talks best of the three. Then I revisit the Campo Santo, and my old friend, the Sexton, has two—but *one* the prettiest daughter imaginable; and I amuse myself with contrasting her beautiful and innocent face of fifteen with the skulls with which he has peopled several cells, and particularly with that of one skull dated 1766, which was once covered (the tradition goes,) by the most lovely features of Bologna—noble and rich. When I look at these, and at this girl —when I think of what *they were*, and what *she* must be—why, then, my dear Murray, I won't shock you by saying what I think. It is little matter what becomes of us "bearded men," but I don't like the notion of a beautiful woman's lasting less than a beautiful tree—than her own picture—her own shadow, which won't change so to the Sun as her face to the mirror. I must leave off, for my head aches consumedly: I have never been quite well since the night of the representation of Alfieri's *Mirra*, a fortnight ago.

Yours ever,

B.

Digitized by Google

## 749.—To the Countess Guiccioli.[1]

Bologna, August 25, 1819.

MY DEAR TERESA,—I have read this book in your garden;—my love, you were absent, or else I could not have read it. It is a favourite book of yours, and the writer was a friend of mine. You will not understand these English words, and *others* will not understand them —which is the reason I have not scrawled them in Italian. But you will recognise the hand-writing of him who passionately loved you, and you will divine that, over a book which was yours, he could only think of love. In that word, beautiful in all languages, but most so in yours—*Amor mio*—is comprised my existence here and hereafter. I feel I exist here, and I fear that I shall exist hereafter,—to *what* purpose you will decide; my destiny rests with you, and you are a woman, seventeen years of age, and two out of a convent. I wish that you had stayed there, with all my heart,—or, at least, that I had never met you in your married state.

But all this is too late. I love you, and you love me, —at least, you *say so*, and *act* as if you *did* so, which last is a great consolation in all events. But *I* more than love you, and cannot cease to love you.

Think of me, sometimes, when the Alps and the ocean divide us,—but they never will, unless you *wish* it.

BYRON.

## 750.—To John Murray.

Bologna, August 29, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I have been in a rage these two days, and am still bilious therefrom. You shall hear. A

1. "This letter was written in the last page of Madame Guiccioli's "copy of *Corinne*" (Moore).

Digitized by Google

Captain of Dragoons, Ostheid, Hanoverian by birth, in the Papal troops at present, whom I had obliged by a loan when nobody would lend him a Paul, recommended a horse to me, on sale by a Lieutenant Rossi, an officer who unites the sale of cattle to the purchase of men. I bought it. The next day, on shoeing the horse, we discovered the *thrush*, — the animal being warranted sound. I sent to reclaim the contract and the money. The Lieutenant desired to speak with me in person. I consented. He came. It was his own particular request. He began a story. I asked him if he would return the money. He said no—but he would exchange. He asked an exorbitant price for his other horses. I told him that he was a thief. He said he was an *officer* and a man of honour, and pulled out a Parmesan passport signed by General Count Neipperg.[1] I answered, that as he was an officer, I would treat him as such; and that as to his being a Gentleman, he might prove it by returning the money: as for his Parmesan passport, I should have valued it more if it had been a Parmesan Cheese. He answered in high terms, and said that if it were in the *morning* (it was about eight o'clock in the evening) he would have *satisfaction*. I then lost my temper: "As "for THAT," I replied, "you shall have it directly,—it "will be *mutual* satisfaction, I can assure you. You are "a thief, and, as you say, an officer; my pistols are in

1. Adam Albert, Comte de Neipperg (1771–1828), son of Leopold, Comte de Neipperg (1728–1792) who was for many years Austrian Ambassador at the Court of Naples, distinguished himself in the Austrian service during the wars of the French Revolution, and of Napoleon, both as a soldier and a diplomatist. A handsome man, of charming manners, he was Austrian Ambassador at Stockholm (1810–13), where Mad. de Staël called him "the German Bayard." When Marie Louise, after the final abdication of Napoleon, retired to Parma, Neipperg administered the duchy in her name. The date of his marriage with the ex-empress is uncertain; but she bore him three children.

Digitized by Google

"the next room loaded; take one of the candles, examine, "and make your choice of weapons." He replied, that *pistols* were *English weapons; he* always fought with the *Sword*. I told him that I was able to accommodate him, having three regimental swords in a drawer near us: and he might take the longest and put himself on guard.

All this passed in presence of a third person. He then said *No;* but tomorrow morning he would give me the meeting at any time or place. I answered that it was not usual to appoint meetings in the presence of witnesses, and that we had best speak man to man, and fix time and instruments. But as the man present was leaving the room, the Lieutenant Rossi, before he could shut the door after him, ran out roaring "help and "murder" most lustily, and fell into a sort of hysteric in the arms of about fifty people, who all saw that I had no weapon of any sort or kind about me, and followed him, asking him what the devil was the matter with him. Nothing would do: he ran away without his hat, and went to bed, ill of the fright. He then tried his complaint at the police, which dismissed it as frivolous. He is, I believe, gone away, or going.

The horse was warranted, but, I believe, so worded that the villain will not be obliged to refund, according to law. He endeavoured to raise up an indictment of assault and battery, but as it was in a public inn,[1] in a frequented street, there were too many witnesses to the contrary; and, as a military man, he has not cut a martial figure, even in the opinion of the Priests. He ran off in such a hurry that he left his hat, and never missed it till he got to his hostel or inn. The facts are as I tell you: I can assure you, he began by "coming

1. The *Albergo di San Marco*, 12, Via Ugo Bassi, closed in 1883.

Digitized by Google

"Captain Grand over me," or I should never have thought of trying his "cunning in fence;" but what could I do? He talked of "honour, and satisfaction, "and his commission"—he produced a military passport: there are severe punishments for *regular duels* on the continent, and trifling ones for *rencontres*, so that it is best to fight it out directly; he had robbed, and then wanted to insult me;—what could I do? My patience was gone, and the weapons at hand, fair and equal: besides, it was just after dinner, when my digestion is bad, and I don't like to be disturbed. His friend Ostheid is at Forli; we shall meet on my way back to Ravenna. The Hanoverian seems the greater rogue of the two; and if my valour does not ooze away like Acres's—"Odds flints and triggers!"[1] if it should be a rainy morning, and my stomach in disorder, there may be something for the obituary.

Now pray, "Sir Lucius, do not you look upon me as "a very ill used gentleman?"[1] I send my Lieutenant to match Hobhouse's *Major* Cartwright: "and so good "morrow to you, good Master Lieutenant." With regard to other things I will write soon, but I have * * * incessantly for these last three months, and quarrelling and fooling till I can scribble no more.

Yours,

B.

## 751.—To John Murray.

Bologna, Sept. 17, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I have received a small box consigned by you to a Mr. Allan with three portraits in it. Whom

1. In *The Rivals* (act iii. sc. 4) *Acres* cries, "Odds flints, pans, "and triggers! I'll challenge him directly." Previously, in the same act and scene, he says, "In short, I have been very ill-used, "Sir Lucius. I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as "a very ill-used gentleman."



Digitized by Google

am I to thank for this? You never alluded to it in any of your letters. I enclose you an advertisement of Cognac brandy from Galignani's Messenger; it runs—"in order to facilitate the consumption of that truly "wholesome and agreeable article." Is not this delightful? The gravity of the author; and the *truly* wholesome!

Yours ever truly,

B.

## 752.—To John Murray.

Venice,[1] Sept. 27th, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I enclose Roberts. You will be glad to hear that I am well. I never knew that I had written

1. The Countess Guiccioli had returned with Byron from Bologna to Venice, and lived with him at La Mira. She thus relates the circumstances of her return (Moore's *Life*, p. 409)—

"Il Conte Guiccioli doveva per affari ritornare a Ravenna; lo "stato della mia salute esiggeva che io ritornassi in vece a Venezia. "Egli acconsentì dunque che Lord Byron mi fosse compagno di "viaggio. Partimmo da Bologna alli 15 di Sre.—visitammo insieme "i Colli Euganei ed Arquà; scrivemmo i nostri nomi nel libro che "si presenta a quelli che fanno quel pellegrinaggio. Ma sopra tali "rimembranze di felicità non posso fermarmi, caro Signr. Moore; "l'opposizione col presente é troppo forte, e se un anima benedetta "nel pieno godimento di tutte le felicità celesti fosse mandata "quaggiù e condannata a sopportare tutte le miserie della nostra "terra non potrebbe sentire più terribile contrasto frà il passato ed "il presente di quello che io sento dacchè quella terribile parola è "giunta alle mie orecchie, dacchè ho perduto la speranza di più "vedere quello di cui uno sguardo valeva per me più di tutte le "felicità della terra. Giunti a Venezia i medici mi ordinarono di "respirare l'aria della campagna. Egli aveva una villa alla Mira, "—la cedesse a me, e venne meco. Là passammo l'autunno, e là "ebbi il bene di fare la vostra conoscenza."

The following is Moore's translation of the passage quoted above:—

"Some business having called Count Guiccioli to Ravenna, I "was obliged, by the state of my health, instead of accompanying "him, to return to Venice, and he consented that Lord Byron "should be the companion of my journey. We left Bologna on "the fifteenth of September: we visited the Euganean Hills and

Digitized by Google

to say I was ill in *health*. I had a bad head, and nerves, owing to heat, and exhaustion, and plague with the illness of another person, and other vexations at Bologna, but am right again now—at least for the present. These fits are the penalties of the life I have always led, and must be paid. I am not the less obliged by your and everybody's good-nature. Thank Hobhouse, and say I shall write soon at full.

I write now merely to return Roberts. You must not mind me when I say I am ill; it merely means low spirits—and folly.

Yours ever truly,

BYRON.

## 753.—To John Cam Hobhouse.

Venice, Oct. 3rd, 1819.

DEAR HOBHOUSE,—I wrote to Murray last week and begged him to reassure you of my health and sanity, as far as I know at present At Bologna I was out of sorts in health and spirits. Here—I have health at least.

My South American project, of which I believe I spoke to you (as you mention it)—was this. I perceived by

"Arquà, and wrote our names in the book which is presented to "those who make this pilgrimage. But I cannot linger over these "recollections of happiness;—the contrast with the present is too "dreadful. If a blessed spirit, while in the full enjoyment of "heavenly happiness, were sent down to this earth to suffer all "its miseries, the contrast could not be more dreadful between the "past and the present, than what I have endured from the moment "when that terrible word reached my ears, and I for ever lost the "hope of again beholding him, one look from whom I valued "beyond all earth's happiness. When I arrived at Venice, the "physicians ordered that I should try the country air, and Lord "Byron, having a villa at La Mira, gave it up to me, and came to "reside there with me. At this place we passed the autumn, and "there I had the pleasure of forming your acquaintance."

Digitized by Google

the inclosed paragraphs[1] that advantageous offers were —or are to be held out to settlers in the Venezuela territory. My affairs in England are nearly settled or in prospect of settlement; in Italy I have no debts, and

1. The following are the newspaper cuttings enclosed in the letter:—

"[Torn]. . . reached town from Angostura dated 5th . . . "June. They chiefly relate to the acceptance and ratification of a "colonizing plan submitted to the Government of Venezuela by a "few patriotic Gentlemen. The proposals were transmitted by an "engineer of distinguished merit, who was also instructed to report "on the fitness of the soil and salubrity of the climate. His reports "are extremely satisfactory. His reception by the patriotic and "benevolent men who stand at the head of the Venezuelan Govern- "ment was beyond his most sanguine expectations. A preliminary "treaty was formed for the conveyance to trustees of an immense "tract of choice lands for the purpose of being afterwards allotted "out to families: and two members of the Congress, Don Juan "German Roscio and Don Fernando Penalver, were to leave "Angostura in a fortnight for London, with full powers to make a "definitive arrangement and regulate other affairs of the Govern- "ment. The terms for the colonists will be extremely favourable. "Fathers of families are to become citizens the moment they land; "others at the time prescribed by the Constitution. Export duties "free for five years. We understand it is the intention of the parties "to form a company to carry the project into execution; and that "when the whole is arranged due notice will be given to the "public."

"ISLAND OF GRENADA, July 25. Yesterday Don Fernand de "Penalver and Col. Bergara embarked. They are going to "England as commissioners from Venezuela and New Granada "with ample powers. The first is a civil character: the other is a "military man."

"To be sure," writes Hobhouse to Murray (*Memoir of John Murray*, vol. i. p. 408), "it is impossible that Lord B. should "seriously contemplate, or, if he does, he must not expect us to "encourage, this mad scheme. I do not know what in the world "to say, but presume some one has been talking nonsense to him. "Let Jim Perry go to Venezuela if he will—he may edit his 'Inde- "pendent Gazette' amongst the Independents themselves, and "reproduce his stale puns and politics without let or hindrance. "But our poet is too good for a planter—too good to sit down "before a fire made of mare's legs, to a dinner of beef without salt "and bread. It is the wildest of all his meditations—pray tell him. "The plague and Yellow Jack, and famine and free quarter, besides "a thousand other ills, will stare him in the face. No tooth- "brushes, no corn-rubbers, no *Quarterly Reviews*. In short, plenty "of all he abominates, and nothing of all he loves."

Digitized by Google

I could leave it when I choose. The Anglo-Americans are a little too coarse for me, and their climate too cold, and I should prefer the others. I could soon grapple with the Spanish language. Ellice or others would get me letters to Bolivar and his government, and if men of little, or no property are encouraged there, surely with present income, and—if I could sell Rochdale—with some capital, I might be suffered as a landholder there, or at least a tenant, and if possible, and legal—a Citizen. I wish you would speak to *Perry* of the *M*[*orning*] *C*[*hronicle*] —who is their Gazetteer—about this, and ask like Jeremy Diddler[1]—not for eighteen pence—but information on the subject. I assure you that I am very *serious* in the idea, and that the notion has been about me for a long time, as you will see by the worn state of the advertisement.

I should go there with my natural daughter, Allegra, —now nearly three years old, and with me here,—and pitch my tent for good and all.

I am not tired of Italy, but a man must be a Cicisbeo and a Singer in duets, and a connoisseur of Operas—or nothing—here. I have made some progress in all these accomplishments, but I can't say that I don't feel the degradation. Better be an unskilful Planter, an awkward settler,—better be a hunter, or anything, than a flatterer of fiddlers, and fan carrier of a woman. I like women —God he knows—but the more their system here developes upon me, the worse it seems, after Turkey too; here the *polygamy* is all on the female side. I have been an intriguer, a husband, a whoremonger, and now I am a Cavalier Servente — by the holy! it is a strange sensation. After having belonged in my own and other countries to the intriguing, the married, and

1. In Kenney's farce of *Raising the Wind*.

Digitized by Google

the keeping parts of the town,—to be sure an honest arrangement is the best, and I have had that too, and have—they expect it to be for *life*, thereby, I presume, excluding longevity. But let us be serious, if possible.

You must not talk to me of England, that is out of the question. I had a house and lands, and a wife and child, and a name there—once—but all these things are transmuted or sequestered. Of the last, and best, ten years of my life, nearly six have been passed out of it. I feel no love for the soil after the treatment I received before leaving it for the last time, but I do not hate it enough to wish to take a part in its calamities, as on either side harm must be done before good can accrue; revolutions are not to be made with rosewater. My taste for revolution is abated, with my other passions.

Yet I want a country, and a home, and—if possible —a free one. I am not yet thirty-two years of age. I might still be a decent Citizen, and found a house, and a family as good—or better—than the former. I could at all events occupy myself rationally, my hopes are not high, nor my ambition extensive, and when tens of thousands of our countrymen are colonizing (like the Greeks of old in Sicily and Italy) from so many causes, does my notion seem visionary or irrational? There is no freedom in Europe—that's certain; it is besides a worn out portion of the globe. What I should be glad of is *information* as to the encouragement, the means required, and what is acceded, and what would be my probable reception. Perry—or Ellice or many merchants would be able to tell you this for me. I won't go there to travel, but to settle. Do not laugh at me; you will, but I assure you I am quite in earnest if the thing be practicable. I do not want to have anything

Digitized by Google

to do with war projects, but to go there as a settler, and if as a citizen all the better, my own government would not, I think, refuse me permission, if they know their own interest; such fellows as I am are no desideratum for Sidmouth[1] at present, I think. Address to me at Venice. I should of course come to Liverpool, or some town on your coast, to take my passage and receive my credentials. Believe me,

Ever yours most truly,

BYRON.

## 754.—To James Wedderburn Webster.

Venice, Oct^r. 5^th 1819.

DEAR W.,—The latter part of your letter which I presume refers to some communication you may have had with Lady B.'s family—I do not quite understand; —if you imagine that there is any prospect of a reconciliation, you are deceived either by your own good wishes for such an event, or by some ambiguity in *their* expressions on the subject which must naturally be an awkward one. I feel naturally anxious to know what could have led you for a moment into such a notion, and I ask you from curiosity, to tell me more explicitly. Did you see my daughter—and how is she? I have another here (by a different mother) who is three years old nearly, and a pretty child. Whatever you have to say you may speak out—it is a subject too public long ago—and too remote now—to require any delicacy

1. Henry Addington (1757–1844), created in 1805 Viscount Sidmouth, was Home Secretary at the time of the "Peterloo "Massacre," August 16, 1819. He was also officially responsible for the repressive policy of the Government in 1817–18, for the committee of secrecy, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, the laws against seditious meetings, and the restrictions imposed on the liberty of the press.

Digitized by Google

between old acquaintances further than politeness requires. I have some idea of going with my natural daughter Allegra to settle in South America—provided a colonizing plan which I have heard of, as about to be proposed by some Commissioners from Venezuela now on their way to England—be put in execution.

On this subject my last letter to Mr. Hobhouse has explained my ideas. If you are in any communication with the Noel family or Lady B., I wish you would request them to aid me in getting my *settled* property transferred from the *funds* to other and (what I think) safer security. Mortgage or any thing would be preferable to the funds.

Pray write to me, and believe me,

Yours very truly,

BYRON.

## 755.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

October 22, 1819.

I am glad to hear of your return, but I do not know how to congratulate you—unless you think differently of Venice from what I think now, and you thought always. I am, besides, about to renew your troubles by requesting you to be judge between Mr. E[dgecombe] and myself in a small matter of imputed peculation and irregular accounts on the part of that phœnix of secretaries. As I knew that you had not parted friends, at the same time that *I* refused for my own part any judgment but *yours*, I offered him his choice of any person, the *least* scoundrel native to be found in Venice, as his own umpire; but he expressed himself so convinced of your impartiality, that he declined any but *you*. This is in his favour.—The paper within will explain to you the

Digitized by Google

default in his accounts. You will hear his explanation, and decide if it so please you. I shall not appeal from the decision.

As he complained that his salary was insufficient, I determined to have his accounts examined, and the enclosed was the result. It is all in black and white with documents, and I have despatched Fletcher to explain (or rather to perplex) the matter.

I have had much civility and kindness from Mr. Dorville during your journey, and I thank him accordingly.

Your letter reached me at your departure,[1] and displeased me very much:—not that it might not be true in its statement and kind in its intention, but you have lived long enough to know how useless all such representations ever are, and must be, in cases where the passions are concerned. To reason with men in such a situation is like reasoning with a drunkard in his cups —the only answer you will get from him is, that he is sober, and you are drunk.

Upon that subject we will (if you like) be silent. You might only say what would distress me without answering any purpose whatever; and I have too many obligations to you to answer you in the same style. So that you should recollect that you have also that advantage over me. I hope to see you soon.

I suppose you know that they said at Venice, that

1. "Hoppner, before his departure from Venice for Switzerland, "had written a letter to Byron, entreating him 'to leave Ravenna "while yet he had a whole skin, and urging him not to risk the "safety of a person he appeared so sincerely attached to—as well as "his own—for the gratification of a momentary passion, which could "only be a source of regret to both parties.' In the same letter "Hoppner informed him of some reports he had heard lately at "Venice, which increased his anxiety respecting the consequences of "the connection formed by him" (Moore).

Digitized by Google

I was arrested at Bologna as a *Carbonaro*—a story about as true as their usual conversation. Moore[1] has been here—I lodged him in my house at Venice, and went to see him daily; but I could not at that time quit La Mira entirely. You and I were not very far from meeting in Switzerland. With my best respects to Mrs. Hoppner,

Believe me ever and truly, etc.

P.S.—Allegra is here in good health and spirits—I shall keep her with me till I go to England, which will perhaps be in the spring. It has just occurred to me that you may not perhaps like to undertake the office of judge between Mr. E. and your humble servant. —Of course, as Mr. Liston (the comedian, not the ambassador) says, "*it is all hoptional;*"[2] but I have no other resource. I do not wish to find him a rascal, if it can be avoided, and would rather think him guilty of carelessness than cheating. The case is this—can I, or not, give him a character for *honesty*?—It is not my intention to continue him in my service.

## 756.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

October 25, 1819.

You need not have made any excuses about *the* letter. I never said but that you might, could, should, or would have reason. I merely described my own state of inaptitude to listen to it at that time, and in those circumstances. Besides, you did not speak from your

1. For Moore's account of his stay at Venice, see Appendix VIII.
2. "In Kenney's farce of *Raising the Wind*" (Moore). The words are not in the play. Probably they were part of Liston's "gag." For Sir Robert Liston, British Ambassador at Constantinople, see *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 185.

Digitized by Google

*own* authority—but from what you said you had heard. Now my blood boils to hear an Italian speaking ill of another Italian, because, though they lie in particular, they speak truth in general by speaking ill at all;—and although they know that they are trying and wishing to lie, they do not succeed, merely because they can say nothing so bad of each other, that it *may* not, and must not be true, from the atrocity of their long debased national character.[1]

With regard to E., you will perceive a most irregular, extravagant account, without proper documents to support it. He demanded an increase of salary, which made me suspect him; he supported an outrageous extravagance of expenditure, and did not like the dismission of the cook; he never complained of him—as in duty bound—at the time of his robberies. I can only say, that the house expense is now under *one half* of what it then was, as he himself admits. He charged for a comb *eighteen* francs,—the real price was *eight*. He charged a passage from Fusina for a person named Iambelli, who paid it *herself*, as she will prove if necessary. He fancies, or asserts himself, the victim of a domestic complot against him;—accounts are accounts —prices are prices;—let him make out a fair detail. *I*

1. "This language," says Hoppner, in some remarks upon the above letter, quoted by Moore (*Life*, p. 424), "is strong, but it was "the language of prejudice; and he was rather apt thus to express "the feelings of the moment, without troubling himself to consider "how soon he might be induced to change them. He was at this "time so sensitive on the subject of Madame Guiccioli that, merely "because some persons had disapproved of her conduct, he declaimed "in the above manner against the whole nation. I never," continues Hoppner, "was partial to Venice; but disliked it almost "from the first month of my residence there. Yet I experienced "more kindness in that place than I ever met with in any country, "and witnessed acts of generosity and disinterestedness such as "rarely are met with elsewhere."

Digitized by Google

am not prejudiced against him—on the contrary, I supported him against the complaints of his wife, and of his former master, at a time when I could have crushed him like an earwig; and if he is a scoundrel, he is the greatest of scoundrels, an ungrateful one. The truth is, probably, that he thought I was leaving Venice, and determined to make the most of it. At present he keeps bringing in *account after account*, though he had always money in hand—as I believe you know my system was never to allow longer than a week's bills to run. Pray read him this letter—I desire nothing to be concealed against which he may defend himself.

Pray how is your little boy? and how are you?—shall be up in Venice very soon, and we will be bilious together. I hate the place and all that it inherits.

Yours, etc.

## 757.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Oct^r. 28^th 1819.

MY DEAR HOPPNER,—I do not request you to *decide* upon Mr. Edgecombe's *character*, but upon his *accounts*, which, as I can not understand them, I shall be glad to find any body who *can*. You are taking a great deal of trouble on my account, and I shall not add the difficult responsibility of pronouncing upon this person's honesty, being resolved to do that myself according to the result of the examination, and of other circumstances.

I expect from Mr. Edgecombe—1^st^y, all *receipts* of bills paid, etc., lists of furniture, etc., since his entrance into my service; 2^dly^, that no bills of long standing should appear, he having had money always, and orders to pay *weekly*, without fail or excuse; and 3^dly^, some sort of order in his arrangement of the bills. For instance

Digitized by Google

there is a bill of twenty francs brought in by a Chymist here of *May last*, which Mr. Edgecombe, in his way to Venice *last week*, called to say *he would pay*. Why was this not paid before?—the money has been in his hands since the *Spring*.

I should be glad of an explanation from him *why* Merryweather has not been arrested, the cause having been decided six months ago. I suspect *Collusion* between Mr. E. and Merryweather, and Castelli the Advocate.

When the whore Margarita was dismissed from my house, several unpaid bills were brought in, for all of which I had advanced money before to *Mr. Edgecombe*. Was it or was it not his duty to have seen them paid?

I expect that he will go over the list of the Mocenigo furniture, as also that of this Casino (to say nothing of the other), and give in a list of articles wanting, and the expence of those to be replaced, before I pay him off, or give him a character. *This* he had the order to do *monthly*, and I do not find that it has been done.

There is the price of the bay mare sold, and the rent of the lodgers to whom he let part of the Casino to be accounted for, and, above all, *all receipts* and proofs of the non-existence of any bills of more than a fortnight's date. I shall cause an advertisement in Italian to be inserted in the public gazettes, calling upon all persons for their accounts (in case of any demur or doubt on his part) with my reasons for so doing at length. So tell him that he may get his honesty brushed a little cleaner than it appears at present.

There is nothing in which I have been all along more particular at Venice than to *settle weekly*, and to furnish the funds for so doing. I beg you to ask him this, and dare him to deny it.

Digitized by Google

I have to thank you for your letter, and your compliment to *Don Juan*. I said nothing to you about it, understanding that it is a sore subject with the moral reader, and has been the cause of a great row.[1] But I am glad you like it.

I will say nothing about the Shipwreck, except that I hope you think it as *nautical* and *technical* as verse would admit in the Octave measure.

The poem has *not sold well*, so Murray says; "but "the best Judges, etc., say, etc.," so says that worthy man. I have never seen it in print. The third Canto is in advance about 100 stanzas; but the failure of the two first has weakened my *estro*, and it will neither be so good as the two former, nor completed unless I get a little more *riscaldato* [warmed up] in it's behalf.

I understand the outcry was beyond everything—pretty Cant for people who read *Tom Jones*, and *Roderick Random*, and the *Bath Guide*, and Ariosto, and Dryden, and Pope, to say nothing of *Little's Poems*. Of course I

1. In a letter to Murray (July, 1819), Lady Caroline Lamb criticizes Byron's last publications, *Mazeppa* and *Don Juan*—

"I think there is something fine both in the conception and "execution of *Mazeppa;* there is also something pretty. The *Don* "*Juan* is neither witty, nor in very good taste, and the Couplet "about Romilly is infamous; there is not the Razor edge of satire "to make it go down, and the levity of the style ill accords with "the subject. To say the least of it, the whole is in very bad taste, "and were Keane to act 'Harliquin,' and Miss O'Neale 'Polly "Peachum,' it would not do them such irreparable harm as it will "do Lord Byron. La-fontaine was indecent, it must be owned; "but every line is an epigram, and, like Voltaire, the Comicality "of his wit and the peculiarity of his Genius, in a language too far "more refined than ours, excused in some manner his profligacy. "But here it is not good enough to excuse anything. Most of the "lines are weak, lengthy, and though to strangers it must appear "incoherent nonsense, to those who penetrate further it will excite "contempt and disgust. Thank you, however, for your kindness. "I am alone and ill and have been entertained. I would gladly "have the rest of the prose story which, though absurd, is well "written and interests me."

Digitized by Google

refer to the *morality* of those works, and not to any pretension of mine to compete with them in any thing but decency.

I hope yours is the Paris Edition, and that you did not pay the London price. I have seen neither, except in the newspapers, nor *Maseppa*, nor the "Ode" to that now empty Oyster Shell—the city of Venice.

Pray make my respects to Mrs. H. and take care of your little boy. All my household have the fever and ague, except Fletcher, Allegra, and mys*en* (as we used to say in Nottinghamshire), and the horses, and Mutz, and Moretto.

In the beginning of Nov^r., perhaps sooner, I expect to have the pleasure of seeing you.

To-day I got drenched by a thunder storm, and my horse and groom too, and his horse all bemired up to the middle in a cross-road; it was summer at Noon, and at five we were be-wintered. But the lightning was sent perhaps to let us know that the summer was not yet over. It is queer weather for the 27^th. Oct^r.

Yours ever most truly,

BYRON.

I have no books, nor parcels from England, since your expedition; but my library is at your service. Edgecombe has the key; there are some additions to it since you saw it last.

## 758.—To John Murray.

Venice, October 29, 1819.

DEAR MURRAY,—Yours of the 15th came yesterday. I am sorry that you do not mention a large letter addressed to *your care* for Lady Byron, from me, at

Digitized by Google

Bologna, two months ago. Pray tell me, was this letter received and forwarded?

You say nothing of the Vice Consulate for the Ravenna patrician, from which it is to be inferred that the thing will not be done.

I had written about a hundred stanzas of a *third* Canto to *Don Juan*, but the reception of the two first is no encouragement to you nor me to proceed.

I had also written about 600 lines of a poem, the *Vision* (or *Prophecy*) *of Dante*,[1] the subject a view of Italy in the ages down to the present—supposing Dante to speak in his own person, previous to his death, and embracing all topics in the way of prophecy, like Lycophron's *Cassandra*.[1] But this and the other are both at a standstill for the present.

I gave Moore, who is gone to Rome, my *Life* in MS., in 78 folio sheets, brought down to 1816.[2] But this I put into his hands for *his* care, as he has some other MSS. of mine—a journal kept in 1814, etc. Neither are for publication during my life; but when I am cold you may do what you please. In the mean time, if you like to read them you may, and show them to any body you like—I care not.

The *Life* is *Memoranda*, and not *Confessions*. I have left out all my *loves* (except in a general way), and many other of the most important things (because I must

1. Published, with *Marino Faliero*, April 21, 1821. The *Cassandra* of Lycophron, Alexandrian poet and grammarian (circ. 284 B.C.), contains, in nearly 1500 iambic lines, prophecies of events in Greek history.

2. This formed a portion of the manuscript, which was completed December, 1820, and bought by Murray from Moore, November, 1821, for 2000 guineas. After Byron's death, the whole MS. was destroyed at 50, Albemarle Street, in the presence of Moore, Hobhouse, Colonel Doyle, Wilmot Horton, Luttrell, and Murray, May 17, 1824.

For Moore's account of Byron's gift of the MS., see *Life*, p. 422.

Digitized by Google

not compromise other people), so that it is like the play of Hamlet—"the part of Hamlet omitted by particular "desire." But you will find many opinions, and some fun, with a detailed account of my marriage and its consequences, as true as a party concerned can make such accounts, for I suppose we are all prejudiced.

I have never read over this life since it was written, so that I know not exactly what it may repeat or contain. Moore and I passed some merry days together;[1] but so far from "seducing me to England," as you suppose, the account he gave of me and mine was of any thing but a nature to make me wish to return: it is not such opinions of the public that would weigh with me one way or the other; but I think they should weigh with others of my friends before they ask me to return to a place for which I have no great inclination.

I probably must return for business, or in my way to America. Pray, did you get a letter for Hobhouse, who will have told you the contents? I understood that the Venezuelan commissioners had orders to treat with emigrants; now I want to go there. I should not make a bad South-American planter, and I should take my natural daughter, Allegra, with me, and settle. I wrote at length to Hobhouse, to get information from Perry, who, I suppose, is the best topographer and trumpeter of the new Republicans. Pray write.

Yours ever,

B.

P.S.—Moore and I did nothing but laugh: he will tell you of "my whereabouts," and all my proceedings at this present; they are as usual. You should not let

1. For Moore's account of his visit to Byron at Venice, see Appendix VIII., and *Life*, pp. 409-423.



Digitized by Google

those fellows publish false *Don Juans;*[1] but do not put *my name*, because I mean to cut Roberts up like a gourd, in the preface, if I continue the poem.

## 759.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

October 29, 1819.

MY DEAR HOPPNER, — The Ferrara Story is of a piece with all the rest of the Venetian manufacture; you may judge. I only changed horses there since I wrote to you after my visit in June last. "*Convent*"—and "*carry off*" quotha!—and "*girl*"—I should like to know *who* has been carried off—except poor dear *me*. I have been more ravished myself than any body since the Trojan war; but as to the arrest and it's causes—one is as true as the other, and I can account for the invention of neither. I suppose it is some confusion of the tale of the F[ornarina]—and of M.ª Guiccioli—and half a dozen more—but it is useless to unravel the web, when one has only to brush it away.

I shall settle with Muster Edgecombe who looks very blue at your *in-decision*, and swears that he is the best arithmetician in Europe; and so I think also, for he makes out two and two to be five.

You may see me next week. I have a horse or two more (five in all) and I shall repossess myself of Lido, and I will rise earlier, and we will go and shake our livers over the beach as heretofore—if you like, and we will make the Adriatic roar again with our hatred of that now empty Oyster shell without it's pearl—the city of Venice.

1. Byron's *Don Juan* was published July 15, 1819. William Hone's *Don John, Canto the Third*, appeared four days later, July 19. Dr. Maginn's *Don Juan Unread* was also published in 1819.

Digitized by Google

Murray sent me a letter yesterday; the impostors have published *two* new *third* Cantos of *Don Juan;* the devil take the impudence of some blackguard bookseller or other there*for*.

Perhaps I did not make myself understood. He told me the sale had not been great—1200 out of 1500 quarto I believe (which is nothing after selling 13000 of *The Corsair* in one day) but that the "best judges, etc.," had said it was very fine, and clever, and particularly good English, and poetry, and all those consolatory things which are not, however, worth a single copy to a bookseller;—and as to the author—of course I am in a damned passion at the bad taste of the times, and swear there is nothing like posterity, who of course must know more of the matter than their Grandfathers.

There has been an eleventh commandment to the women not to read it—and what is still more extraordinary they seem not to have broken it. But that can be of little import to them, poor things, for the reading or non-reading a book will never keep * * * [them from evil];—but it is of import to Murray, who will be in scandal for his aiding as publisher.

He is bold howsomedever—wanting two more cantos against the winter. I think that he had better not, for by the larkins! it will only make a new row for him.

Edgecombe is gone to Venice to-day to consign my chattels to t'other fellow.

Count G. comes to Venice next week and I am requested to consign his wife to him, which shall be done —with all her linen.

What you say of the long evenings at the Mira, or Venice, reminds me of what *Curran* said to Moore—"so—I hear—you have married a pretty woman—and "a very good creature too—an excellent creature—pray

Digitized by Google

"—um—*how do you pass your evenings?*" it is a devil of a question that, and perhaps as easy to answer with a wife as with a mistress; but surely they are longer than the nights. I am all for morality now, and shall confine myself henceforward to the strictest adultery, which you will please to recollect is all that that virtuous wife of mine has left me.

If you go to Milan, pray leave at least a *Vice-Consul*—the only Vice that will ever be wanting in Venice. D'Orville is a good fellow. But you should go to England in the Spring with me, and plant Mrs. Hoppner at Berne with her relations for a few months.

I wish you had been here (at Venice I mean not the Mira) when Moore was here; we were very merry and tipsy—he *hated* Venice by the way, and swore it was a sad place.

So—Madame Albrizzi's health is in danger, poor woman. * * *

Moore told me that at Geneva [1] they had made a devil

1. "During my stay at Geneva," writes Moore (*Life*, p. 410), "an opportunity had been afforded me of observing the exceeding "readiness with which even persons the least disposed to be pre-"judiced gave an ear to any story relating to Lord Byron in which "the proper portions of odium and romance were but plausibly "mingled. In the course of conversation, one day, with the late "amiable and enlightened Monsieur D[umont], that gentleman "related, with much feeling, to my fellow-traveller and myself, the "details of a late act of seduction of which Lord Byron had, he "said, been guilty, and which was made to comprise within itself "all the worst features of such unmanly frauds upon innocence;— "the victim, a young unmarried lady, of one of the first families "of Venice, whom the noble seducer had lured from her father's "house to his own, and, after a few weeks, most inhumanly turned "her out of doors. In vain, said the relator, did she entreat to "become his servant, his slave;—in vain did she ask to remain in "some dark corner of his mansion, from which she might be able "to catch a glimpse of his form as he passed. Her betrayer was "obdurate, and the unfortunate young lady, in despair at being "thus abandoned by him, threw herself into the canal, from which "she was taken out but to be consigned to a mad-house."

Digitized by Google

of a story of the Fornaretta—"young lady seduced—"subsequent abandonment—leap into the grand canal "—her being in the hospital of *fous* in consequence." I should like to know who was nearest being made "*fou*" and be damned to them. Don't you think me in the interesting character of a very ill used gentleman?

I hope your little boy is well. Allegrina is flourishing like a pome-granate blossom.

Yours ever,

BYRON.

## 760.—To John Murray.

Venice, November 8, 1819.

DEAR MURRAY,—Mr. Hoppner has lent me a copy of *Don Juan*, Paris Edition, which he tells me is read in Switzerland by Clergymen and ladies with considerable approbation. In the second Canto, you must alter the 49th Stanza to

'Twas twilight, and the sunless day went down
Over the waste of waters, like a veil
Which if withdrawn would but disclose the frown
Of one whose hate is masked but to assail:
Thus to their hopeless eyes the Night was shown,
And grimly darkled o'er their faces pale,
And the dim desolate deep; twelve days had fear
Been their familiar, and now Death was here.

And, in Stanza 208 of the same canto, make the sixth line run

Newly a
Strong palpitation rises, 'tis her boon.

Otherwise there is a syllable too few.

Digitized by Google

On referring to the MS. I found that I had stupidly blundered all the rhymes of the 49th stanza, such as they are printed. Cast your eye over; you will perceive the necessity of the alteration.

I have been ill these eight days with a tertian fever, caught in the country on horseback in a thunderstorm: yesterday I had the fourth attack. The two last were very smart, the first day as well as the last being preceded by vomiting. It is the fever of the place and the Season. I feel weakened, but not unwell, in the intervals, except headache and lassitude.

Count G. has arrived in Venice, and has presented his Spouse (who had preceded him two months for her health and the prescriptions of Dr. Aglietti) with a paper of conditions, regulations of hours and conduct and morals, etc., etc., which he insists on her accepting, and she persists in refusing. I am expressly, it should seem, excluded by this treaty, as an indispensible preliminary; so that they are in high discussion, and what the result may be I know not, particularly as they are consulting friends.[1]

To-night, as Countess G. observed me poring over *Don Juan*, she stumbled by mere chance on the 137th

1. Count Alessandro Guiccioli is said to have intercepted a letter to his wife from her father, Count Ruggiero Gamba, in the autumn of 1819, which brought matters to a crisis; but see *note* 1, p. 289. Count Guiccioli insisted that his wife should break off all communication with Byron, who returned from La Mira to Venice, while Countess Guiccioli went back with her husband to Ravenna. "He returned to Venice," says Hoppner, as quoted by Moore (*Life*, p. 429), "very much out of spirits, owing to Madame "Guiccioli's departure, and out of humour with every body and "every thing around him. We resumed our rides at the Lido, "and I did my best not only to raise his spirits, but to make him "forget his absent mistress, and to keep him to his purpose of return-"ing to England. He went into no society, and having no longer "any relish for his former occupation, his time, when he was not "writing, hung heavy enough on hand."

Digitized by Google

Stanza of the first Canto, and asked me what it meant. I told her, "Nothing—but 'your husband is coming.'"[1] As I said this in Italian, with some emphasis, she started up in a fright, and said, "*Oh my God, is* he *coming?*" thinking it was *her own*, who either was or ought to have been at the theatre. You may suppose we laughed when she found out the mistake. You will be amused, as I was;—it happened not three hours ago.

I wrote to you last week, but have added nothing to the third Canto since my fever, nor to *the Prophecy of Dante*. Of the former there are about 110 octaves done; of the latter about 500 lines—perhaps more. Moore saw the third *Juan*, as far as it then went. I do not know if my fever will let me go on with either, and the tertian lasts, they say, a good while. I had it in Malta on my way home, and the Malaria fever in Greece the year before that. The Venetian is not very fierce, but I was delirious one of the nights with it, for an hour or two, and, on my senses coming back, found Fletcher sobbing on one side of the bed, and la Contessa G.[2]

1. "For God's sake, madam—madam—here's my master."

2. The following particulars of his delirium are given by Countess Guiccioli: "Sul cominciare dell' inverno il Conte Guiccioli venne "a prendermi per ricondurmi a Ravenna. Quando egli giunse Ld. "Byron era ammalato di febbri prese per essersi bagnato avendolo "sorpreso un forte temporale mentre faceva l' usato suo esercizio a "cavallo. Egli aveva delirato tutta la notte, ed io aveva sempre "vegliato presso al suo letto. Nel suo delirio egli compose molti "versi che ordinò al suo domestico di scrivere sotto la sua dittatura. "La misura dei versi era esatissima, e la poesia pure non pareva "opera di una mente in delirio. Egli la conservò lungo tempo dopo "restabilito—poi l' abbrucciò."—"At the beginning of winter Count "Guiccioli came from Ravenna to fetch me. When he arrived, "Lord Byron was ill of a fever, occasioned by his having got wet "through;—a violent storm having surprised him while taking his "usual exercise on horseback. He had been delirious the whole "night, and I had watched continually by his bedside. During his "delirium he composed a good many verses, and ordered his servant "to write them down from his dictation. The rhythm of these "verses was quite correct, and the poetry itself had no appearance

Digitized by Google

weeping on the other; so that I had no want of attendance. I have not yet taken any physician, because, though I think they may relieve in Chronic disorders, such as Gout and the like, etc., etc., etc. (though they can't cure them)—just as Surgeons are necessary to set bones and tend wounds—yet I think fevers quite out of their reach, and remediable only by diet and Nature.

I don't like the taste of bark, but I suppose that I must take it soon.

Tell Rose that somebody at Milan (an Austrian, Mr. Hoppner says) is answering his book.[1] William Bankes is in quarantine at Trieste. I have not lately heard from you. Excuse this paper: it is long paper shortened for the occasion. What folly is this of Carlile's trial?[2] why

"of being the work of a delirious mind. He preserved them for "some time after he got well, and then burned them."

Moore was also informed that, during his ravings at this time, Byron was constantly haunted by the idea of his mother-in-law,—taking every one that came near him for her, and reproaching those about him for letting her enter his room.

1. Probably his *Letters from the North of Italy to Henry Hallam, Esq.* (1819). (See p. 211, *note* 1.)

2. Richard Carlile (1790–1843), son of a Devonshire shoemaker, worked as a tinman in various parts of the country and (1813–16) in London. There he began to write to the newspapers on the social distress of the day, and ultimately established a printing-office. In 1817 he printed Southey's *Wat Tyler*, reprinted Hone's suppressed *Parodies*, and published his own *Political Litany*, and other parodies, for which he received eighteen weeks' imprisonment. In 1818 he republished Paine's *Age of Reason*, formerly adjudged to be a "blasphemous libel." He also reprinted at 55, Fleet Street, an American work called *Principles of Nature*. On the first of these charges he was indicted by the Crown (October 12, 1819), on the second by the Society for the Suppression of Vice (October 15, 1819). In both cases he was convicted. On November 16, 1819, he was sentenced by Mr. Justice Bayley for the first libel to two years' imprisonment and a fine of £1000, and for the second to one year's imprisonment and a fine of £500, the imprisonment to continue until the fines were paid. He remained in Dorchester Gaol till 1825. Subsequently (1830–35), he was sentenced to further terms of imprisonment for a libel on the bishops and resistance to Church rates.

Carlile spent nearly ten years in prison, and, whatever may be

Digitized by Google

let him have the honours of a martyr? it will only advertise the books in question.

Yours ever,

B.

P.S.—As I tell you that the Guiccioli business is on the eve of exploding in one way or the other, I will just add that, without attempting to influence the decision of the Contessa, a good deal depends upon it. If she and her husband make it up, you will, perhaps, see me in England sooner than you expect: if not, I shall retire with her to France or America, change my name, and lead a quiet provincial life. All this may seem odd, but I have got the poor girl into a scrape; and as neither her birth, nor her rank, nor her connections by birth or marriage are inferior to my own, I am in honour bound to support her through: besides, she is a very pretty woman—ask Moore—and not yet one and twenty.

If she gets over this and I get over my tertian, I will, perhaps, look in at Albemarle Street, some of these days, *en passant* to Bolivar.

## 761.—To William Bankes.[1]

Venice, November 20, 1819.

A tertian ague, which has troubled me for some time, and the indisposition of my daughter, have prevented me from replying before to your welcome letter. I have not been ignorant of your progress nor of your

thought of his political and religious opinions, he made a memorable stand for the freedom of the press and public speaking. Among his numerous publications were *The Republican* (1819–26), a periodical edited from Dorchester Gaol; *The Gorgon*, a weekly paper (January 1828—December, 1829); *The Gospel according to Richard Carlile* (1827); etc., etc.

1. For William John Bankes, see *Letters*, vol. i. p. 120, *note*.

Digitized by Google

discoveries, and I trust that you are no worse in health from your labours. You may rely upon finding every body in England eager to reap the fruits of them; and as you have done more than other men, I hope you will not limit yourself to saying less than may do justice to the talents and time you have bestowed on your perilous researches. The first sentence of my letter will have explained to you why I cannot join you at Trieste. I was on the point of setting out for England (before I knew of your arrival) when my child's illness has made her and me dependent on a Venetian Proto-Medico.

It is now seven years since you and I met;—which time you have employed better for others and more honourably for yourself than I have done.

In England you will find considerable changes, public and private,—you will see some of our old college contemporaries turned into lords of the Treasury, Admiralty, and the like,—others become reformers and orators,—many settled in life, as it is called,—and others settled in death; among the latter, (by the way, not our fellow collegians,) Sheridan, Curran, Lady Melbourne, Monk Lewis, Frederick Douglas,[1] etc., etc., etc.; but you will still find Mr. * * living and all his family, as also * * * * *.

Should you come up this way, and I am still here, you need not be assured how glad I shall be to see you; I long to hear some part from you, of that which I expect in no long time to *see*. At length you have had better fortune than any traveller of equal enterprise (except Humboldt), in returning safe; and after the fate of the

1. The Hon. Frederick Sylvester North Douglas, M.P. for Banbury, only son of Lord Glenbervie, died in October, 1819, in his twenty-ninth year. In 1813 he published an *Essay on Certain Points of Resemblance between the Ancient and Modern Greeks*, which was noticed in the *Quarterly Review* (art. vii.) for January, 1814.

Digitized by Google

Brownes, and the Parkes, and the Burckhardts,[1] it is hardly less surprise than satisfaction to get you back again.

Believe me ever and very affectionately yours,

BYRON.

## 762.—To the Countess Guiccioli.[2]

Nov. 25th (1819).

Tu sei, e sarai sempre mio primo pensier. Ma in questo momento sono in un' stato orribile non sapendo cosa decidere;—temendo, da una parte, comprometterti in eterno col mio ritorno a Ravenna, e colle sue conseguenze; e, dal' altra, perderti, e me stesso, e tutto quel che ho conosciuto o gustato di felicità, nel non vederti più. Ti prego, ti supplico calmarti, e credere che non posso cessare ad amarti che colla vita. * * *

1. William George Browne (1768-1813), the Oriental traveller, was murdered between Tabriz and Teheran, as it is supposed, by banditti. Mungo Park (1771-1806), the African explorer, was killed by the natives on the Niger between Timbuctoo and Boussa. John Lewis Burckhardt (1784-1817), the Oriental traveller, died of dysentery at Alexandria while preparing an expedition to the Niger.

2. The following is Moore's translation of the fragment given above:—

"You are, and ever will be, my first thought. But, at this "moment, I am in a state most dreadful, not knowing which way "to decide;—on the one hand, fearing that I should compromise "you for ever, by my return to Ravenna and the consequences of "such a step, and, on the other, dreading that I shall lose both you "and myself, and all that I have ever known or tasted of happiness, "by never seeing you more. I pray of you, I implore you, to be "comforted, and to believe that I cannot cease to love you but with "my life. * * *

"I go to save you, and leave a country insupportable to me "without you. Your letters to F * * and myself do wrong to my "motives—but you will yet see your injustice. It is not enough "that I must leave you—from motives of which ere long you will "be convinced—it is not enough that I must fly from Italy, with a "heart deeply wounded, after having passed all my days in solitude "since your departure, sick both in body and mind—but I must "also have to endure your reproaches without answering and without "deserving them. Farewell! in that one word is comprised the "death of my happiness."

Digitized by Google

Io parto, per *salvarti*, e lascio un paese divenuto insopportabile senza di te. Le tue lettere alla F * *, ed anche a me stesso fanno torto ai miei motivi; ma col tempo vedrai la tua ingiustizia. Tu parli del dolor—io lo sento, ma mi mancano le parole. Non basta lasciarti per dei motivi dei quali tu eri persuasa (non molto tempo fa)—non basta partire dall' Italia col cuore lacerato, dopo aver passato tutti i giorni dopo la tua partenza nella solitudine, ammalato di corpo e di anima—ma ho anche a sopportare i tuoi rimproveri, senza replicarti, e senza meritarli. Addio—in quella parola è compresa la morte di mia felicità.

## 763.—To John Murray.

Venice, December 4, 1819.

My dear Murray,—You may do as you please, but you are about an hopeless experiment. Eldon will decide against you,[1] were it only that my name is in the record. You will also recollect that if the publication is pronounced against, on the grounds you mention, as *indecent and blasphemous*, that *I* lose all right in my daughter's *guardianship* and *education* — in short, all paternal authority, and every thing concerning her, except the pleasure I may have chanced to have had in begetting her. It was so decided in Shelley's case, because he had written *Queen Mab*,[2] etc., etc. However, you can ask

1. An injunction to restrain piratical publishers from infringing the copyright of *Don Juan* was applied for in Chancery, and obtained, in spite of Byron's fears. (For the legal opinions of Sharon Turner, and Shadwell, see *Memoir of John Murray*, vol. i. pp. 405–408.)

2. On December 10, 1816, the body of Harriet Westbrook, Shelley's first wife, was found in the Serpentine. On the 30th of the same month he married Mary Godwin. The proceedings to which Byron refers commenced January 8, 1817, when the infants, Eliza Ianthe Shelley and Charles Bysshe Shelley, Shelley's children

Digitized by Google

the lawyers, and do as you like: I do not inhibit you trying the question; I merely state one of the consequences to me. With regard to the Copy-right, it is hard that you should pay for a non-entity: I will therefore refund it, which I can very well do, not having spent it, nor begun upon it; and so we will be quits on that score: it lies at my banker's.

Of the Chancellor's law I am no judge; but take up *Tom Jones*, and read him—Mrs. Waters and Molly Seagrim; or Prior's "Hans Carvel" and "Paulo Purganti:" Smollett's *Roderick Random*, the chapter of Lord Strutwell, and many others; *Peregrine Pickle*, the scene of the Beggar Girl; Johnson's *London*, for coarse expressions; for instance, the words "*," and "* * * * * * * *;" Anstey's *Bath Guide*,[1] the "Hearken,

by his first wife, acting through their grandfather, John Westbrook, filed a Bill of Complaint to the Lord Chancellor, Lord Eldon.

The question to be decided was whether Shelley should have the custody of his children, or whether guardians should be appointed by the Court of Chancery. One of the grounds on which it was urged that Shelley had forfeited his parental rights was the publication of "*Queen Mab*, with notes, and other works," in which he was alleged to have "blasphemously derided the truth of the Christian revelation "and denied the existence of God as the Creator of the universe."

The case was heard before Lord Eldon (January 24, 1817), and judgment was delivered (March 27) two months later. Lord Eldon decided that Shelley's atheistical opinions, views on marriage, and conduct, disqualified him from exercising exclusive parental authority over his children. The plan for their education, and the selection of the persons to whose care they were to be entrusted, were left for subsequent decision. Ultimately (July 25, 1817), the children were placed under the care of Dr. and Mrs. Hume, the persons nominated by Shelley, and he was allowed to visit them a certain number of times in each year (Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, vol. ii. chap. iii. pp. 76–95).

When Murray desired to establish Byron's copyright in *Don Juan*, Byron expected that the Lord Chancellor would decide the poem to be immoral, and, therefore, not the subject of copyright, and that Lady Byron's relations might profit by such a decision to deprive him of any parental rights which he might possess over his daughter.

1. Letter xiv., in which Miss Prudence B—n—r—d informs Lady

Digitized by Google

"Lady Betty, hearken;"—take up, in short, Pope, Prior, Congreve, Dryden, Fielding, Smollett, and let the Counsel select passages, and what becomes of *their* copyright, if his *Wat Tyler* decision is to pass into a precedent? I have nothing more to say: you must judge for yourselves.

I wrote to you some time ago. I have had a tertian ague: my daughter Allegra has been ill also, and I have been almost obliged to run away with a married woman. But with some difficulty, and many internal struggles, I reconciled the lady with her lord, and cured the fever of the Child with bark, and my own with cold water. I think of setting out for England by the Tyrol in a few days, so that I could wish you to direct your next letter to Calais.[1] Excuse my writing in great haste and late in

Betty that she has been elected to Methodism by a vision. "There "is a new thing published, that will make you split your cheeks "with laughing. It is called the New Bath Guide. It stole into "the world, and for a fortnight no soul looked into it, concluding "its name was its true name. No such thing. It is a set of letters "in verse, in all kinds of verses, describing the life at Bath, and "incidentally every thing else; but so much wit, so much humour, "fun and poetry, never met together before. I can say it by heart, "though a quarto, and if I had time would write it you down; for "it is not yet reprinted, and not one to be had."—*Horace Walpole* to *G. Montague*, June 20, 1766, *Letters* (ed. Cunningham), vol. iv. p. 504.

"Have you read the New Bath Guide? It is the only thing in "fashion, and is a new and original kind of humour. Miss Prue's "conversation I doubt you will paste down, as Sir W. St Quintyn "did before he carried it to his daughter; yet I remember you all "read Crazy Tales without pasting."—*Gray* to *Dr. Wharton*, August 26, 1766.

1. Mrs. Leigh, writing to Murray, in two undated notes, twice refers to this plan of revisiting England—

(1) "DEAR SIR,—Ten thousand thanks for *all* your kindness to "me and mine. The book is now being *devoured* by at least 8 eyes. "*My* letter is very short, enclosing a few lines from Mr. Kinnaird, "which I am to send to Lady Byron. They relate to the subject "of funds, etc., etc. He thinks he shall be in or near England by "the *New Year*, and desires a line addressed to Calais!!!! I hope "to see you, my dear Sir, when convenient. I am wretched when

Digitized by Google

the morning, or night—whichever you please to call it. The third Canto of *Don Juan* is completed, in about two hundred stanzas—very decent, I believe, but do not know, and it is useless to discuss until it can be ascertained if it may or may not be a property.

My present determination to quit Italy was unlooked for; but I have explained the reasons in letters to my sister and Douglas K[innaird], a week or two ago. My progress will depend upon the snows of the Tyrol, and the health of my child, who is at present quite recovered; but I hope to get on well, and am

Yours ever and truly,

B.

P.S.—Many thanks for your letters, to which you are not to consider this as an answer, but an acknowledgement.

## 764.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

[Undated.]

MY DEAR HOPPNER,—Partings are but bitter work at best, so that I shall not venture on a second with you.

"I think of your *loan* to me so long unpaid; but as *times* improve, "I hope to acquit myself. I am, in the meantime, and ever,

"Most gratefully yours,

"A. L."

(2) "DEAR SIR,—I return the enclosed with a great many "thanks: it has given me pleasure as far as relates to *you*. I think "you ought not to oppose an act of *justice* such as that, and which "would reflect credit upon *him*. I fear the return is but too "decidedly and certainly intended. This must sound strange to all "but you and those who can enter into all my fears for him. With "*humble* submission to *wiser* opinions, I can't but think that the less "that is said of this return the better. Let him *come* and *go* (if "possible) like other people! or else he may share the fate of his "odious DON. *Pray* call upon me, and believe me, Dear Sir,

"Your most truly obliged,

"A. L.

"*Burn this immediately.*"

Digitized by Google

Pray make my respects to Mrs. Hoppner, and assure her of my unalterable reverence for the singular goodness of her disposition, which is not without its reward even in this world—for those who are no great believers in human virtues would discover enough in her to give them a better opinion of their fellow-creatures, and—what is still more difficult—of themselves, as being of the same species, however inferior in approaching its nobler models. Make, too, what excuses you can for my omission of the ceremony of leave-taking. If we all meet again, I will make my humblest apology; if not, recollect that I wished you all well; and, if you can, forget that I have given you a great deal of trouble.

Yours, etc., etc.

## 765.—To John Murray.

Venice, 10th 10bre 1819.

DEAR MURRAY,—Since I last wrote, I have changed my mind, and shall not come to England. The more I contemplate, the more I dislike the place and the prospect. You may, therefore, address to me as usual *here*, though I mean to go to another city. I have finished the third Canto of *D[on] J[uan]*, but the things I have read and heard discourage all further publication—at least for the present. You may try the copy question, but you'll lose it: the cry is up, and cant is up. I should have no objection to return the price of the copyright, and have written to Mr. Kind by this post on the subject. Talk with him.

I have not the patience, nor do I feel interest enough in the question, to contend with the fellows in their own slang; but I perceive Mr. Blackwood Magazine and one or two others of your missives have been hyperbolical in

Digitized by Google

their praise, and diabolical in their abuse. I like and admire Wilson, and *he* should not have indulged himself in such outrageous license:[1] it is overdone and defeats itself. What would he say to the grossness without passion, and the misanthropy without feeling, of *Gulliver's Travels*? When he talks of Lady Byron's business, he talks of what he knows nothing about; and you may tell him that no one can more desire a public investigation of that affair than I do.

I sent home by Moore (*for* Moore only, who has my journal too), my memoir written up to 1816, and I gave him leave to show it to whom he pleased, but *not to publish*, on any account. You may read it, and you may let Wilson read it, if he likes—not for his *public* opinion, but his private; for I like the man, and care very little about his magazine. And I could wish Lady B. herself

1. Byron was mistaken; the article (Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine* of August, 1819) was not by Wilson. For his answer to the review, see Appendix IX. The following are some of the passages to which Byron refers:—

"Those who are acquainted, (as who is not?) with the main "incidents in the private life of Lord Byron . . . will scarcely "believe that the odious malignity of this man's bosom should have "carried him so far as to make him commence a filthy and impious "poem, with an elaborate satire on the character and manners of "his wife—from whom, even by his own confession, he has been "separated only in consequence of his own cruel and heartless "misconduct. . . . To offend the love of such a woman was wrong "—but it might be forgiven; to desert her was unmanly—but he "might have returned and wiped for ever from her eyes the tears "of her desertion:—but to injure, and to desert, and then to turn "back and wound her widowed privacy with unhallowed strains "of cold-blooded mockery,—was brutally, fiendishly, inexpiably "mean. For impurities there might be some possibility of pardon ". . . for impiety there might at least be pity . . . but for "offences such as this . . . which speak the wilful and determined "spite of an unrepenting, unsoftened, smiling, sarcastic, joyous "sinner—for such diabolical, such slavish vice, there can be neither "pity nor pardon. Our knowledge that it is committed by one "of the most powerful intellects our island has ever produced, "lends intensity a thousandfold to the bitterness of our indignation." —Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine* (August, 1819), vol. v. p. 514.



Digitized by Google

to read it, that she may have it in her power to mark anything mistaken or misstated; as it will probably appear after my extinction, and it would be but fair she should see it,—that is to say, herself willing.

Perhaps I may take a journey to you in the Spring; but I *have* been ill, and *am* indolent and indecisive, because few things interest me. These fellows first abused me for being gloomy, and now they are wroth that I am, or attempted to be, facetious. I have got such a cold and headache that I can hardly see what I scrawl: the winters here are as sharp as needles. Some time ago, I wrote to you rather fully about my Italian affairs; at present I can say no more, except that you shall know further by and bye.

Your Blackwood accuses me of treating women harshly: it may be so, but I have been their martyr. My whole life has been sacrificed *to* them and *by* them. I mean to leave Venice[1] in a few days, but you will

1. Hoppner's recollections of Byron's life at Venice, now brought to an end, are thus given by Moore (*Life*, pp. 417, 418)—

"I have often lamented that I kept no notes of his observations "during our rides and aquatic excursions. Nothing could exceed "the vivacity and variety of his conversation, or the cheerfulness of "his manner. His remarks on the surrounding objects were always "original: and most particularly striking was the quickness with "which he availed himself of every circumstance, however trifling "in itself, and such as would have escaped the notice of almost any "other person, to carry his point in such arguments as we might "chance to be engaged in. He was feelingly alive to the beauties "of nature, and took great interest in any observations, which, as "a dabbler in the arts, I ventured to make upon the effects of light "and shadow, or the changes produced in the colour of objects by "every variation in the atmosphere.

"The spot where we usually mounted our horses had been a "Jewish cemetery; but the French, during their occupation of "Venice, had thrown down the enclosures, and levelled all the "tombstones with the ground, in order that they might not inter- "fere with the fortifications upon the Lido, under the guns of which "it was situated. To this place, as it was known to be that where "he alighted from his gondola and met his horses, the curious "amongst our country-people, who were anxious to obtain a glimpse

Digitized by Google

address your letters *here* as usual. When I fix elsewhere, you shall know.

Yours,

BYRON.

"of him, used to resort; and it was amusing in the extreme to "witness the excessive coolness with which ladies, as well as gentle- "men, would advance within a very few paces of him, eyeing him, "some with their glasses, as they would have done a statue in a "museum, or the wild beasts at Exeter 'Change. However flatter- "ing this might be to a man's vanity, Lord Byron, though he bore "it very patiently, expressed himself, as I believe he really was, "excessively annoyed at it.

"I have said that our usual ride was along the sea-shore, and that "the spot where we took horse, and of course dismounted, had been "a cemetery. It will readily be believed that some caution was "necessary in riding over the broken tombstones, and that it was "altogether an awkward place for horses to pass. As the length of "our ride was not very great, scarcely more than six miles in all, "we seldom rode fast, that we might at least prolong its duration, "and enjoy as much as possible the refreshing air of the Adriatic. "One day, as we were leisurely returning homewards, Lord Byron, "all at once, and without saying anything to me, set spurs to his "horse and started off at full gallop, making the greatest haste he "could to get to his gondola. I could not conceive what fit had "seized him, and had some difficulty in keeping even within a "reasonable distance of him, while I looked around me to discover, "if I were able, what could be the cause of his unusual precipitation. "At length I perceived at some distance two or three gentlemen, "who were running along the opposite side of the island nearest "the Lagoon, parallel with him, towards his gondola, hoping to "get there in time to see him alight; and a race actually took place "between them, he endeavouring to outstrip them. In this he, in "fact, succeeded, and, throwing himself quickly from his horse, "leapt into his gondola, of which he hastily closed the blinds, "ensconcing himself in a corner so as not to be seen. For my own "part, not choosing to risk my neck over the ground I have spoken "of, I followed more leisurely as soon as I came amongst the grave- "stones, but got to the place of embarkation just at the same "moment with my curious countrymen, and in time to witness their "disappointment at having had their run for nothing. I found him "exulting in his success in outstripping them. He expressed in "strong terms his annoyance at what he called their impertinence, "whilst I could not but laugh at his impatience, as well as at the "mortification of the unfortunate pedestrians, whose eagerness to "see him, I said, was, in my opinion, highly flattering to him. "That, he replied, depended on the feeling with which they came; "and he had not the vanity to believe that they were influenced by "any admiration of his character or of his abilities, but that they

Digitized by Google

P.S.—Pray let my sister be informed that I am not coming as I intended: I have not the courage to tell

"were impelled merely by idle curiosity. Whether it was so or "not, I cannot help thinking that if they had been of the other sex, "he would not have been so eager to escape from their observation, "as in that case he would have repaid them glance for glance.

"The curiosity that was expressed by all classes of travellers to "see him, and the eagerness with which they endeavoured to pick "up any anecdotes of his mode of life, were carried to a length "which will hardly be credited. It formed the chief subject of their "inquiries of the gondoliers who conveyed them from *terra firma* to "the floating city; and these people, who are generally loquacious, "were not at all backward in administering to the taste and humours "of their passengers, relating to them the most extravagant and "often unfounded stories. They took care to point out the house "where he lived, and to give such hints of his movements as might "afford them an opportunity of seeing him. Many of the English "visitors, under pretext of seeing his house, in which there were "no paintings of any consequence, nor, besides himself, anything "worthy of notice, contrived to obtain admittance through the "cupidity of his servants, and with the most barefaced impudence "forced their way even into his bedroom, in the hopes of seeing "him. Hence arose, in a great measure, his bitterness towards "them, which he has expressed in a note to one of his poems, on the "occasion of some unfounded remark made upon him by an anony- "mous traveller in Italy; and it certainly appears well calculated "to foster that cynicism which prevails in his latter works more "particularly, and which, as well as the misanthropical expressions "that occur in those which first raised his reputation, I do not "believe to have been his natural feeling. Of this I am certain, "that I never witnessed greater kindness than in Lord Byron.

"The inmates of his family were all extremely attached to him, "and would have endured anything on his account. He was indeed "culpably lenient to them; for even when instances occurred of "their neglecting their duty, or taking an undue advantage of his "good nature, he rather bantered than spoke seriously to them upon "it, and could not bring himself to discharge them, even when he "had threatened to do so. An instance occurred within my know- "ledge of his unwillingness to act harshly towards a tradesman "whom he had materially assisted, not only by lending him money, "but by forwarding his interest in every way that he could. Not- "withstanding repeated acts of kindness on Lord Byron's part, this "man robbed and cheated him in the most barefaced manner; and "when at length Lord Byron was induced to sue him at law for the "recovery of his money, the only punishment he inflicted upon him, "when sentence against him was passed, was to put him in prison "for one week, and then to let him out again, although his debtor "had subjected him to a considerable additional expense by dragging "him into all the different courts of appeal, and that he never at

Digitized by Google

her so myself, at least as yet; but I will soon, *with the reasons*. Pray tell her so.

## 766.—To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

Bologna, Dec^r 23^d 1819.

DEAREST AUGUSTA,—The health of my daughter Allegra, the cold season, and the length of the journey, induce me to postpone for some time a purpose (never very willing on my part) to revisit Great Britain.

You can address to me at Venice as usual. Wherever I may be in Italy, the letter will be forwarded.

I enclose to you all that *long hair*,[1] on account [of] which you would not go to see my picture. You will see

"last recovered one halfpenny of the money owed to him. Upon "this subject he writes to me from Ravenna, 'If * * * [Merry-"weather] is *in* (prison), let him out; if *out*, put him in for a week, "merely for a lesson, and give him a good lecture.'

"He was also ever ready to assist the distressed, and he was most "unostentatious in his charities; for besides considerable sums which "he gave away to applicants at his own house, he contributed largely "by weekly and monthly allowances to persons whom he had never "seen, and who, as the money reached them by other hands, did "not even know who was their benefactor. One or two instances "might be adduced where his charity certainly bore an appearance "of ostentation; one particularly, when he sent fifty louis d'or to a "poor printer whose house had been burnt to the ground, and all "his property destroyed; but even this was not unattended with "advantage; for it in a manner compelled the Austrian authorities "to do something for the poor sufferer, which I have no hesitation "in saying they would not have done otherwise; and I attribute it "entirely to the publicity of his donation, that they allowed the man "the use of an unoccupied house belonging to the government until "he could rebuild his own, or re-establish his business elsewhere. "Other instances might be perhaps discovered where his liberalities "proceeded from selfish, and not very worthy motives;* but these "are rare, and it would be unjust in the extreme to assume them as "proofs of his character."

1. See p. 271, *note* 1.

* "The writer here, no doubt, alludes to such questionable liber-"alities as those exercised towards the husbands of his two favourites, "Madame Segati and the Fornarina" (Moore).

Digitized by Google

that it was not so very long. I curtailed it yesterday, my head and hair being weakly after my tertian.

I wrote to you not very long ago, and, as I do not know that I could [add] anything satisfactory to that letter, I may as well finish this.

In a letter to Murray, I requested him to apprize you that my journey was postponed; but here, there, and every where, know me,

Yours ever and very truly,

B.

Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER XIX.

### DECEMBER, 1819—MARCH, 1820.

THE PALAZZO GUICCIOLI AT RAVENNA—*MORGANTE MAGGIORE*—*THE PROPHECY OF DANTE*—*FRANCESCA OF RIMINI*—OBSERVATIONS UPON AN ARTICLE IN BLACKWOOD'S *EDINBURGH MAGAZINE*.

### 767.—To the Countess Guiccioli.[1]

[Undated.]

La F * * ti avra detta, *colla sua solita sublimità*, che l'Amor ha vinto. Io non ho potuto trovare forza di anima per lasciare il paese dove tu sei, senza vederti almeno un' altra volta :—forse dipenderà da *te* se mai ti lascio più. Per il resto parleremo. Tu dovresti adesso

1. The following is Moore's translation of the above fragment :—
"F * * will already have told you, *with her accustomed sublimity*, "that Love has gained the victory. I could not summon up reso-"lution enough to leave the country where you are, without, at "least, once more seeing you. On *yourself*, perhaps, it will depend, "whether I ever again shall leave you. Of the rest we shall speak "when we meet. You ought, by this time, to know which is most "conducive to your welfare, my presence or my absence. For "myself, I am a citizen of the world—all countries are alike to me. "You have ever been, since our first acquaintance, *the sole object of* "*my thoughts*. My opinion was, that the best course I could adopt, "both for your peace and that of all your family, would have been "to depart and go far, *far* away from you ;—since to have been "near and not approach you would have been, for me, impossible. "You have however decided that I am to return to Ravenna. I "shall accordingly return—and shall *do*—and *be* all that you wish. "I cannot say more."

Digitized by Google

sapere cosa sarà più convenevole al tuo ben essere la mia presenza o la mia lontananza. Io sono cittadino del mondo—tutti i paesi sono eguali per me. Tu sei stata sempre (dopo che ci siamo conosciuti) *l'unico oggetto di miei pensieri.* Credeva[1] che il miglior partito per la pace tua e la pace di tua famiglia fosse il mio partire, e andare ben *lontano;* poichè stare vicino e *non* avvicinarti sarebbe per me impossibile. Ma tu hai deciso che io debbo ritornare a Ravenna—tornaro—e farò—e sarò ciò che tu vuoi. Non posso dirti di più.

## 768.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Ravenna, Dec. 31, 1819.

MY DEAR HOPPNER,—Will you have the goodness to ask or cause to be asked of Siri and Willhalm, if they have not *three* sabres of mine in custody according to the enclosed note? if not, they must have lost two for they never sent them back.

And will you desire Missiaglia to subscribe for and send me the *Minerva*, a Paris paper, as well as *Galignani.*

I have been here this week, and was obliged to put

1. Byron's irresolution is thus described by a female friend of Madame Guiccioli—

"Egli era tutto vestito di viaggio coi guanti fra le mani, col suo "bonnet, e persino colla piccola sua canna; non altro aspettavasi "che egli scendesse le scale, tutti i bauli erano in barca. Milord fa "la pretesta che se suona un ora dopo il mezzodì e che non sia ogni "cosa all' ordine (poichè le armi sole non erano in pronto) egli non "partirebbe più per quel giorno. L'ora suona, ed egli resta."

"He was ready dressed for the journey, his gloves and cap on, "and even his little cane in his hand. Nothing was now waited for "but his coming down stairs,—his boxes being already all on board "the gondola. At this moment, my Lord, by way of pretext, "declares, that if it should strike one o'clock before every thing was "in order (his arms being the only thing not yet quite ready) he "would not go that day. The hour strikes, and he remains!" The writer adds, "It is evident he has not the heart to go;" and the result proved that she had not judged him wrongly (Moore).

Digitized by Google

on my armour and go the night after my arrival to the Marquis Cavalli's, where there were between two and three hundred of the best company I have seen in Italy, —more beauty, more youth, and more diamonds among the women than have been seen these fifty years in the Sea-Sodom.[1] I never saw such a difference between two places of the same latitude, (or *p*latitude, it is all one,)—music, dancing, and play, all in the same *salle.* The G.'s object appeared to be to parade her foreign lover as much as possible, and, faith, if she seemed to glory in the Scandal, it was not for me to be ashamed of it. Nobody seemed surprised;—all the women, on the contrary, were, as it were, delighted with the excellent example. The Vice-legate, and all the other Vices, were as polite as could be;—and I, who had acted on the reserve, was fairly obliged to take the lady under my arm, and look as much like a Cicisbeo as I could on so short a notice,—to say nothing of the embarrassment of a cocked hat and sword, much more formidable to me than ever it will be to the enemy.

I write in great haste—do you answer as hastily. I can understand nothing of all this; but it seems as if the G. had been presumed to be *planted*, and was determined to show that she was not,—*plantation*, in this hemisphere, being the greatest moral misfortune. But this is mere conjecture, for I know nothing about it—except that every body are very kind to her, and not discourteous to me. Fathers, and all relations, quite agreeable.

Yours ever and truly,

B.

1. "Gehenna of the waters! thou Sea-Sodom!
Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods!
Thee and thy serpent seed!"
*Marino Faliero*, act v. sc. 3.

Digitized by Google

P.S.—Best respects to Mrs. H.

I would send the *compliments* of the season; but the season itself is so little complimentary with snow and rain that I wait for sunshine.

## 769.—To Thomas Moore.

January 2, 1820.

MY DEAR MOORE,—

"To-day it is my wedding day;
And all the folks would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware."

Or *thus*:

Here's a happy new year! but with reason,
I beg you'll permit me to say—
Wish me *many* returns of the *season*,
But as *few* as you please of the *day*.

My this present writing is to direct you that, *if she chooses*, she may see the MS. Memoir in your possession. I wish her to have fair play, in all cases, even though it will not be published until after my decease. For this purpose, it were but just that Lady B. should know what is there said of her and hers, that she may have full power to remark on or respond to any part or parts, as may seem fitting to herself. This is fair dealing, I presume, in all events.

To change the subject, are you in England? I send you an epitaph for Castlereagh:—

[Posterity will ne'er survey
A nobler grave than this;
Here lie the bones of Castlereagh:
Stop traveller, * *]

Digitized by Google

Another for Pitt:—

With death doom'd to grapple,
Beneath this cold slab, he
Who lied in the Chapel
Now lies in the Abbey.

The gods seem to have made me poetical this day:—

In digging up your bones, Tom Paine,
Will. Cobbett has done well:
You visit him on earth again,
He'll visit you in hell.

Or,

You come to him on earth again,
He'll go with you to hell.

Pray let not these versiculi go forth with *my* name, except among the initiated, because my friend H. has foamed into a reformer, and, I greatly fear, will subside into Newgate;[1] since the Honourable House, according to Galignani's Reports of Parliamentary Debates, are menacing a prosecution to a pamphlet of his. I shall be very sorry to hear of any thing but good for him, particularly in these miserable squabbles; but these are the natural effects of taking a part in them.

For my own part, I had a sad scene since you went.

1. Byron's fears were well founded. When the above was written, Hobhouse was actually in Newgate. Attention was called, December 10, 1819, in the House of Commons, to certain passages contained in his pamphlet entitled *A Trifling Mistake in Thomas Lord Erskine's recent Preface*. The pamphlet was voted a breach of privilege, and the publisher ordered to attend at the bar; but Edward Ellice, M.P. for Coventry, having stated that he was authorised to give up the name of the writer, Hobhouse was committed to Newgate, and remained there till the dissolution in February, 1820. At the ensuing election, he was chosen one of the representatives for Westminster. (See *Letters*, vol. i. p. 163, *note* 1.)

Digitized by Google

Count Gu. came for his wife, and *none* of those consequences which Scott prophesied ensued. There was no damages, as in England, and so Scott lost his wager. But there was a great scene, for she would not, at first, go back with him—at last, she *did* go back with him; but he insisted, reasonably enough, that all communication should be broken off between her and me. So, finding Italy very dull, and having a fever tertian, I packed up my valise, and prepared to cross the Alps; but my daughter fell ill, and detained me.

After her arrival at Ravenna, the Guiccioli fell ill again too; and at last, her father (who had, all along, opposed the *liaison* most violently till now) wrote to me to say that she was in such a state that *he* begged me to come and see her,—and that her husband had acquiesced, in consequence of her relapse, and that *he* (her father) would guarantee all this, and that there would be no further scenes in consequence between them, and that I should not be compromised in any way. I set out soon after, and have been here ever since. I found her a good deal altered, but getting better:—*all* this comes of reading *Corinna*.

The Carnival is about to begin, and I saw about two or three hundred people at the Marquis Cavalli's the other evening, with as much youth, beauty, and diamonds among the women, as ever averaged in the like number. My appearance in waiting on the Guiccioli was considered as a thing of course. The Marquis is her uncle, and naturally considered me as her relation.

The paper is out, and so is the letter. Pray write. Address to Venice, whence the letters will be forwarded.

Yours, etc.,

B.

Digitized by Google

## 770.—To the Hon. Augusta Leigh.

January 2d 1820.

DEAREST AUGUSTA,—In your reply about the funds some time ago, you quote Lady B.'s acquiescence, "though "she did not partake in the apprehensions," which suggested an investment elsewhere. What does she say *now?* When, if I can believe the papers, the very members of government are transferring property to the *French* funds. Let her remember that I can only judge from what I hear, not being on the spot to observe. . . . If the funds were to go, you do not suppose that I would sit down quietly under it: no, in that case I will make one amongst them, if we are to come to civil buffeting; and perhaps not the mildest. I would wish to finish my days in quiet; but should the time arrive, when it becomes the necessity of every man to act however reluctantly upon the circumstances of the country, I won't be roused up for nothing, and if I do take a part, it will be such a one as my opinion of mankind, a temper not softened by what it has seen and undergone, a mind grown indifferent to pursuits and results, but capable of effort and of strength under oppression or stimulus, but without ambition, because it looks upon all human attempts as conducting to no rational or practicable advantage, would induce me to adopt. And perhaps such a man, forced to act from necessity, would, with the temper I have described, be about as dangerous an animal as ever joined in ravage.

There is nothing which I should dread more than to trust to my own temper, or to have to act in such scenes as I think must soon ensue in England. It is this made me think of S^th^ America, or the Cape, or Turkey, or any where, so that I can but preserve my independence of

Digitized by Google

means to live withal. But, if, in this coming crash, my fortunes are to be swept down with the rest, why then the only barrier which holds me aloof from taking a part in these miserable contests being broken down, I will fight my way too, with what success I know not, but with what moderation I know but too well. If you but knew how I despise and abhor all these men, and all these things, you would easily suppose how reluctantly I contemplate being called upon to act with or against any of the parties. All I desire is to preserve what remains of the fortunes of our house, and then they may do as they please. This makes me anxious to know what has been done. I sent you a letter of D$^{r}$ K. several weeks ago from Venice, proposing an Irish Mortgage to me: I wished you to show this to Lady B.

The other day I wrote to you from hence.

Address to Venice as usual.

Yours ever,

B.

## 771.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Ravenna, January 20, 1820.

I have not decided any thing about remaining at Ravenna. I may stay a day, a week, a year, all my life; but all this depends upon what I can neither see nor foresee. I came because I was called, and will go the moment that I perceive what may render my departure proper. My attachment has neither the blindness of the beginning, nor the microscopic accuracy of the close to such *liaisons;* but "time and the hour" must decide upon what I do. I can as yet say nothing, because I hardly know any thing beyond what I have told you.

I wrote to you last post for my moveables, as there is

Digitized by Google

no getting a lodging with a chair or table here ready; and as I have already some things of the sort at Bologna which I had last summer there for my daughter, I have directed them to be moved; and wish the like to be done with those of Venice, that I may at least get out of the *Albergo Imperiale*, which *is imperial* in all true sense of the epithet. Buffini may be paid for his poison. I forgot to thank you and Mrs. Hoppner for a whole treasure of toys for Allegra before our departure; it was very kind, and we are very grateful.

Your account of the weeding of the Governor's party is very entertaining. If you do not understand the consular exceptions, I do; and it is right that a man of honour, and a woman of probity, should find it so, particularly in a place where there are not "ten righteous." As to nobility—in England none are strictly noble but peers, not even peers' sons, though titled by courtesy; nor knights of the garter, unless of the peerage, so that Castlereagh himself would hardly pass through a foreign herald's ordeal till the death of his father.

The snow is a foot deep here. There is a theatre, and opera,—the *Barber of Seville*. Balls begin on Monday next. Pay the porter for never looking after the gate, and ship my chattels, and let me know, or let Castelli let me know, how my lawsuits go on—but fee him only in proportion to his success. Perhaps we may meet in the spring yet, if you are for England. I see Hobhouse has got into a scrape, which does not please me; he should not have gone so deep among those men without calculating the consequences. I used to think myself the most imprudent of all among my friends and acquaintances, but almost begin to doubt it.

Yours, etc.

Digitized by Google

## 772.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Ravenna, January 31, 1820.

You would hardly have been troubled with the removal of my furniture but there is none to be had nearer than Bologna, and I have been fain to have that of the rooms which I fitted up for my daughter there in the summer removed here. The expense will be at least as great of the land carriage, so that you see it was necessity, and not choice. Here they get every thing from Bologna, except some lighter articles from Forli or Faenza.

If Scott is returned, pray remember me to him, and plead laziness the whole and sole cause of my not replying:—dreadful is the exertion of letter-writing. The Carnival here is less boisterous, but we have balls and a theatre. I carried Bankes to both, and he carried away, I believe, a much more favourable impression of the society here than of that of Venice,—recollect that I speak of the *native* society only.

I am drilling very hard to learn how to double a shawl, and should succeed to admiration if I did not always double it the wrong side out; and then I sometimes confuse and bring away two, so as to put all the *Serventi* out, besides keeping their *Servite* in the cold till every body can get back their property. But it is a dreadfully moral place, for you must not look at any body's wife except your neighbour's,—if you go to the next door but one, you are scolded, and presumed to be perfidious. And then a *relazione* or an *amicizia* seems to be a regular affair of from five to fifteen years, at which period, if there occur a widowhood, it finishes by a *sposalizio;* and in the mean time it has so many rules of its own, that it is not much better. A man actually

Digitized by Google

becomes a piece of female property,—they won't let their *Serventi* marry until there is a vacancy for themselves. I know two instances of this in one family here.

To-night there was a ——[1] Lottery after the opera; it is an odd ceremony. Bankes and I took tickets of it, and buffooned together very merrily. He is gone to Firenze. Mrs. J * * should have sent you my post-script; there was no occasion to have bored you in person. I never interfere in anybody's squabbles,—she may scratch your face herself.

The weather here has been dreadful—snow several feet—a *fiume* broke down a bridge, and flooded heaven knows how many *campi;* then rain came—and it is still thawing—so that my saddle-horses have a sinecure till the roads become more practicable. Why did Lega give away the goat? a blockhead—I must have him again.

Will you pay Missiaglia and the Buffo Buffini of the *Gran Bretagna?* I heard from Moore, who is at Paris; I had previously written to him in London, but he has not yet got my letter, apparently.

Believe me, etc.

## 773.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, February 7, 1820.

DEAR MURRAY,—I have had no letter from you these two months; but since I came here in Dec^r, 1819, I sent you a letter for Moore, who is—God knows *where* —in Paris or London, I presume. I have copied and cut the third Canto of *Don Juan into two*, because it was too long; and I tell you this before hand, because, in case of any reckoning between you and me, these two are only to go for *one*, as this was the original form, and,

1. "The word here, being under the seal, is illegible" (Moore).



Digitized by Google

in fact, the two together are not longer than one of the first. So remember that I have not made this division to *double* upon *you*; but merely to suppress some tediousness in the aspect of the thing. I should have served you a pretty trick if I had sent you, for example, cantos of 50 stanzas each, like that Oriental Country Gentleman, Mr. Galley Knight, with his Eastern Sketches: blessings on his pretty poesy.

I am translating the first Canto of Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*,[1] and have half done it; but these last days and nights of the Carnival confuse and interrupt every thing.

I have not yet sent off the Cantos, and have some doubt whether they ought to be published, for they have not the Spirit of the first: the outcry has not frightened but it has *hurt* me, and I have not written *con amore* this time. It is very decent, however, and as dull "as "the last new Comedy."

I think my translation of Pulci will make you stare: it must be put by the original, stanza for stanza, and verse for verse; and you will see what was permitted in a Catholic country and a bigotted age to a Churchman, on the score of religion:—and so tell those buffoons who accuse me of attacking the liturgy. I will give you due notice, if I send off the two Cantos or the translation of the *Morgante*.

I write in the greatest haste, it being the hour of the Corso, and I must go and buffoon with the rest. My daughter Allegra is just gone with the Countess G. in Count G.'s coach and six to join the Cavalcade, and I must follow with all the rest of the Ravenna world. Our old Cardinal is dead, and the new one not appointed yet; but the Masquing goes on the same, the Vice-Legate

1. Published in *The Liberal* (No. iv.), together with the Italian.

Digitized by Google

being a good Governor. We have had hideous frost and snow, but all is mild again.

Yours ever truly,

B.

## 774.—To William Bankes.

Ravenna, February 19, 1820.

I have room for you in the house here, as I had in Venice, if you think fit to make use of it; but do not expect to find the same gorgeous suite of tapestried halls. Neither dangers nor tropical heats have ever prevented your penetrating wherever you had a mind to it, and why should the snow now?—Italian snow—fie on it!—so pray come. Tita's[1] heart yearns for you, and mayhap

1. Giovanni Battista Falcieri (1798–1874), Byron's gondolier and faithful follower, came of a celebrated family of gondoliers, his father and brothers being in the service of the Mocenigo family at Venice. Tita followed Byron to Ravenna, where Shelley, writing to Peacock in 1821, from Byron's "Circæan Palace," the Palazzo Guiccioli (*Prose Works of Shelley*, ed. H. Buxton Forman, vol. iv. p. 220), mentions him as "a fine fellow, with a prodigious black beard, and who has stabbed two or three people, and is one of the most good-natured-looking fellows I ever saw." Tita was also with Shelley at Lerici (*ibid.*, p. 271) in May, 1822. Accompanying Byron in all his wanderings, Tita followed him to Greece, where he remained with him till his death. In Byron's employment he had saved £700; but after his master's death he was appointed to command a regiment of Albanians, a command which speedily stripped him of his savings. Reduced to poverty, he engaged himself as servant to Mr. James Clay, and then (1830–31) travelled with Benjamin Disraeli in Greece, Turkey, and Egypt. On coming to England in 1832, he became house steward at Bradenham House to Isaac Disraeli, in whose service he remained till his master's death in 1848. At this crisis, fortunately for Tita, Benjamin Disraeli accidentally met Hobhouse, then a member of the Government, and asked for a messengership for Byron's old servant. By Hobhouse's influence Tita was appointed a messenger at the Board of Control. Four years later, when the Board of Control was abolished, the Conservatives were in power, and Tita, at the request of Disraeli, was appointed by Lord Stanley chief messenger at the India Office. He died December 23, 1874, at the age of 76. His widow received a pension from Lord Beaconsfield.

Tita appears in *Don Juan*, and in Lord Beaconsfield's *Contarini*

Digitized by Google

for your silver broadpieces; and your playfellow, the monkey, is alone and inconsolable.

I forget whether you admire or tolerate red hair, so that I rather dread showing you all that I have about me and around me in this city. Come, nevertheless,—you can pay Dante[1] a morning visit, and I will undertake that Theodore and Honoria will be most happy to see you in the forest hard by. We Goths, also, of Ravenna, hope you will not despise our arch-Goth, Theodoric.[2] I must leave it to these worthies to entertain you all the fore part of the day, seeing that I have none at all myself—the lark that rouses me from my slumbers being an afternoon bird. But then, all your evenings, and as much as you can give me of your nights, will be mine. Ay! and you will find me eating flesh, too, like yourself or any other cannibal, except it be upon Fridays. Then, there are more cantos (and be damned to them) of what

*Fleming.* Among Byron's "motley household," which met Rogers at Bologna (Rogers's *Italy*, "Bologna"), came

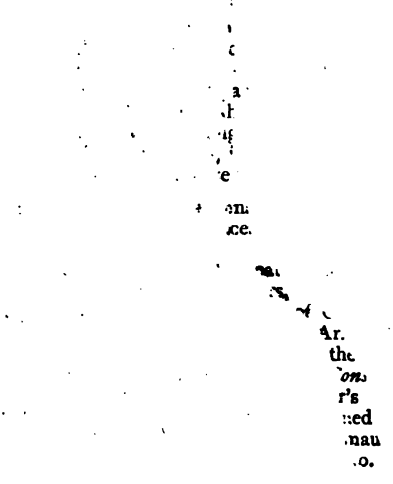
> "Not last nor least,
> Battista, who, upon the moon-light sea
> Of Venice, had so ably, zealously,
> Served, and, at parting, thrown his oar away
> To follow thro' the world; who without stain
> Had worn so long that honourable badge,
> The gondolier's, in a Patrician House
> Arguing unlimited trust."

1. Dante died at Ravenna, September 14, 1321, and was buried in the Church of S. Francesco. (For Theodore and Honoria, see p. 321, *note* 1.)

2. Ravenna became the seat of the Gothic kingdom of Italy, when, after a siege of three years, it fell into the hands of Theodoric (455–526), who, after the murder of Odoacer in 493, ruled Italy till his own death in 526. Himself an Arian, he was induced, towards the close of his reign, to prosecute the orthodox Christians. He caused Boethius, the author of the *Consolations of Philosophy*, to be executed, as well as the philosopher's father-in-law, Symmachus (525). Remorse is said to have hastened his end. His memory is preserved at Ravenna by his palace, his mausoleum, and the churches of S. Apollinare Nuovo and Santo Spirito.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Tita

from a drawing by Dan.l Maclise R.A.

at Hughenden in the possession of Coningsby Disraeli Esq.r M.P.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

the courteous reader, Mr. Saunders, calls Grub Street[1] in my drawer, which I have a little scheme to commit to your charge for England; only I must first cut up (or cut down) two aforesaid cantos into three, because I am grown base and mercenary, and it is an ill precedent to let my Mæcenas, Murray, get too much for his money. I am busy, also, with Pulci—translating—servilely translating, stanza for stanza, and line for line, two octaves every night,—the same allowance as at Venice.

Would you call at your banker's at Bologna, and ask him for some letters lying there for me, and burn them? —or I will—so do not burn them, but bring them,—and believe me,

Ever and very affectionately yours,

BYRON.

P.S.—I have a particular wish to hear from yourself something about Cyprus, so pray recollect all that you can.—Good night.

## 775.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, February 21, 1820.

DEAR MURRAY,—The Bulldogs will be very agreeable: I have only those of this country, who, though good, and ready to fly at any thing, yet have not the

1. "When Mr. W. Bankes * * happened to tell him [Byron], one "day, that he had heard a Mr. Saunders (or some such name), then "resident at Venice, declare that, in his opinion, 'Don Juan was all "Grub-street,' such an effect had this disparaging speech upon his "mind (though coming from a person who, as he himself would "have it, was 'nothing but a d—d salt-fish seller'), that, for some "time after, by his own confession to Mr. Bankes, he could not "bring himself to write another line of the Poem; and, one "morning, opening a drawer where the neglected manuscript lay, "he said to his friend, 'Look here—this is all Mr. Saunders's Grub-"street'" (Moore's *Life*, p. 421).

Digitized by Google

tenacity of tooth and Stoicism in endurance of my canine fellow-citizens: then pray send them by the readiest conveyance—perhaps best by Sea. Mr. Kinnaird will disburse for them, and deduct from the amount on your application or on that of Captain Fyler.

I see the good old King[1] is gone to his place: one can't help being sorry, though blindness, and age, and insanity, are supposed to be drawbacks on human felicity; but I am not at all sure that the latter, at least, might not render him happier than any of his subjects.

I have no thoughts of coming to the Coronation, though I should like to see it, and though I have a right to be a puppet in it; but my division with Lady Byron, which has drawn an equinoctial line between me and mine in all other things, will operate in this also to prevent my being in the same procession.

By Saturday's post I sent you four packets, containing Cantos third and fourth of *D[on] J[uan]*; recollect that these two cantos reckon only as *one* with you and me, being, in fact, the third Canto cut into two, because I found it too long. Remember this, and don't imagine that there could be any other motive. The whole is about 225 Stanzas, more or less, and a lyric of 96 lines, so that they are no longer than the first *single* cantos: but the truth is, that I made the first too long, and should have cut those down also had I thought better. Instead of saying in future for so many cantos, say so many *Stanzas* or pages: it was Jacob Tonson's way,[2] and certainly the best: it prevents mistakes. I

1. George the Third died January 29, 1820.

2. "When Dryden engaged himself in the composition of those "imitations of Boccaccio and Chaucer which have been since called "the *Fables*, he entered into an agreement with Tonson to furnish ten "thousand lines for two hundred and fifty guineas; and, to make up "the full number, he gave the bookseller the Epistle to his Cousin, "and his Alexander's Feast" (Moore).

Digitized by Google

might have sent you a dozen cantos of 40 Stanzas each, —those of *the Minstrel*[1] (Beattie's) are no longer,—and ruined you at once, if you don't suffer as it is; but recollect you are not *pinned down* to anything you say in a letter, and that, calculating even these two cantos as *one* only (which they were and are to be reckoned), you are not bound by your offer: act as may seem fair to all parties.

I have finished my translation of the first Canto of the "*Morgante Maggiore*" of Pulci, which I will transcribe and send: it is the parent, not only of *Whistlecraft*, but of all jocose Italian poetry.[2] You must print it side by side with the original Italian, because I wish the reader to judge of the fidelity: it is stanza for stanza, and often line for line, if not word for word.

You ask me for a volume of manners, etc., on Italy: perhaps I am in the case to know more of them than most Englishmen, because I have lived among the natives, and in parts of the country where Englishmen never resided before (I speak of Romagna and this place particularly); but there are many reasons why I do not choose to touch in print on such a subject. I have lived in their houses and in the heart of their families, sometimes merely as "*amico di casa*," and sometimes as "*Amico di cuore*" of the *Dama*, and in neither case do I feel myself authorized in making a book of them. Their moral is not your moral; their life is not your life; you would not understand it: it is not English, nor French,

1. James Beattie (1735–1803) published the first book of the *Minstrel* in 1771, and the second in 1774.

2. "To the kind reader of our sober clime
This way of writing will appear exotic;
Pulci was sire of the half-serious rhyme,
Who sang when chivalry was more Quixotic,
And revelled in the fancies of the time,
True knights, chaste dames, huge giants, kings despotic."
*Don Juan*, Canto IV. stanza vi.

Digitized by Google

nor German, which you would all understand. The Conventual education, the Cavalier Servitude, the habits of thought and living are so entirely different, and the difference becomes so much more striking the more you live intimately with them, that I know not how to make you comprehend a people, who are at once temperate and profligate, serious in their character and buffoons in their amusements, capable of impressions and passions, which are at once *sudden* and *durable* (what you find in no other nation), and who actually have *no society* (what we would call so), as you may see by their Comedies: they have no real comedy, not even in Goldoni; and that is because they have no Society to draw it from.

Their Conversazioni are not Society at all. They go to the theatre to talk, and into company to hold their tongues. The *women* sit in a circle, and the men gather into groupes, or they play at dreary *Faro* or "*Lotto* "*reale*," for small sums. Their Academie are Concerts like our own, with better music and more form. Their best things are the Carnival balls and masquerades, when every body runs mad for six weeks. After their dinners and suppers, they make extempore verses and buffoon one another;[1] but it is in a humour which you would not enter into, ye of the North.

In their houses it is better. I should know something of the matter, having had a pretty general experience among their women, from the fisherman's wife up to the *Nobil' Donna*, whom I serve. Their system has its rules, and its fitnesses, and decorums, so as to be reduced to a kind of discipline or game at hearts, which admits few deviations, unless you wish to lose it. They

1. "Quelle gaieté," writes Stendhal (*Rome, Naples, et Florence*, ed. 1854, p. 394), "que celle de la société avec laquelle je dine au "Pelegrino! Chacun a des fonctions ridicules et imposantes "adaptées à ses ridicules et prises des *animali parlanti* de Casti."

Digitized by Google

are extremely tenacious, and jealous as furies; not permitting their lovers even to marry if they can help it, and keeping them always close to them in public as in private whenever they can. In short, they transfer marriage to adultery, and strike the *not* out of that commandment. The reason is, that they marry for their parents, and love for themselves. They exact fidelity from a lover as a debt of honour, while they pay the husband as a tradesman, that is, not at all. You hear a person's character, male or female, canvassed, not as depending on their conduct to their husbands or wives, but to their mistress or lover. And—and—that's all. If I wrote a quarto, I don't know that I could do more than amplify what I have here noted. It is to be observed that while they do all this, the greatest outward respect is to be paid to the husbands, not only by the ladies, but by their *Serventi*—particularly if the husband serves no one himself (which is not often the case, however): so that you would often suppose them relations —the *Servente* making the figure of one adopted into the family. Sometimes the ladies run a little restive and elope, or divide, or make a scene; but this is at starting, generally, when they know no better, or when they fall in love with a foreigner, or some such anomaly,—and is always reckoned unnecessary and extravagant.

You enquire after "Dante's prophecy:"[1] I have not done more than six hundred lines, but will vaticinate at leisure.

Of the bust I know nothing. No Cameos or Seals are to be cut here or elsewhere that I know of, in any good style. Hobhouse should write himself to Thorwalsen: the bust was made and paid for three years ago.

1. *The Prophecy of Dante* was published, with *Marino Faliero*, April 21, 1821.

Digitized by Google

Pray tell Mrs. Leigh to request Lady Byron to urge forward the transfer from the funds, which Hanson is opposing, because he has views of investment for some Client of his own, which I can't consent to. I wrote to Lady B. on business this post, addressed to the care of Mr. D. Kinnaird.

Somebody has sent me some American abuse of *Mazeppa* and "the Ode:" in future I will compliment nothing but Canada, and desert to the English.

By the king's death Mr. H[obhouse], I hear, will stand for Westminster: I shall be glad to hear of his standing any where except in the pillory, which, from the company he must have lately kept (I alway except Burdett, and Douglas K., and the genteel part of the reformers), was perhaps to be apprehended. I was really glad to hear it was for libel instead of larceny; for, though impossible in his own person, he might have been taken up by mistake for another at a meeting. All reflections on his present case and place are so *Nugatory*, that it would be useless to pursue the subject further. I am out of all patience to see my friends sacrifice themselves for a pack of blackguards, who disgust one with their Cause, although I have always been a friend to and a Voter for reform. If Hunt had addressed the language to me which he did to Mr. H. last election, I would not have descended to call out such a miscreant who won't fight; but have passed my sword-stick through his body, like a dog's, and then thrown myself on my Peers, who would, I hope, have weighed the provocation: at any rate, it would have been as public a Service as Walworth's chastisement of Wat. Tyler. If we must have a tyrant, let him at least be a gentleman who has been bred to the business, and let us fall by the axe and not by the butcher's cleaver.

No one can be more sick of, or indifferent to, politics

Digitized by Google

than I am, if they let me alone; but if the time comes when a part must be taken one way or the other, I shall pause before I lend myself to the views of such ruffians, although I cannot but approve of a Constitutional amelioration of long abuses.

Lord George Gordon, and Wilkes, and Burdett, and Horne Tooke, were all men of education and courteous deportment: so is Hobhouse; but as for these others, I am convinced that Robespierre was a Child, and Marat a Quaker in comparison of what they would be, could they throttle their way to power.

Yours ever,

B.

## 776.—To William Bankes.

Ravenna, February 26, 1820.

Pulci and I are waiting for you with impatience; but I suppose we must give way to the attraction of the Bolognese galleries for a time. I know nothing of pictures myself, and care almost as little: but to me there are none like the Venetian—above all, Giorgione. I remember well his Judgment of Solomon in the Mariscalchi in Bologna. The real mother is beautiful, exquisitely beautiful. Buy her, by all means, if you can, and take her home with you: put her in safety: for be assured there are troublous times brewing for Italy; and as I never could keep out of a row in my life, it will be my fate, I dare say, to be over head and ears in it; but no matter, these are the stronger reasons for coming to see me soon.

I have more of Scott's novels (for surely they are Scott's) since we met, and am more and more delighted. I think that I even prefer them to his poetry, which (by

Digitized by Google

the way) I redde for the first time in my life in your rooms in Trinity College.

There are some curious commentaries on Dante[1] preserved here, which you should see.

Believe me ever, faithfully and most affectionately,

Yours, etc.

## 777.—To John Murray.

ARGUMENT.[2]

While Charlemagne, the Emperor is living
With {all his Paladins in feast and glee / the Paladins in festival and glee,}
Orlando, 'gainst the traitor Gano giving
Way to his wrath, departs for Paganie,
And saves an Abbey, in a wild arriving,
All from the beastly rage of Giants three.
Slays two of them, and with Morgante ends
The goodly fellowship by making friends.

Ravenna, February 28th 1820.

DEAR MURRAY,—When you publish the Enclosed, it must be with the *Italian text*, as I wish it to be proved

1. No commentaries on Dante are now to be found in the Library of Ravenna, which is, however, enriched by two MSS. of the *Divina Commedia*.

2. The following is the "Argomento" to Luigi Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*:—

"Vivendo Carlo Magno Imperadore
Co' Paladini in festa e in allegria
Orlando contra Gano traditore
S'adira, e parte verso Pagania:
Giunge a un deserto, e del bestial furore
Di tre giganti salva una badia,
Che due n' uccide, e con Morgante elegge
Di buon socio e d'amico usar la legge."

Digitized by Google

with the original, for good or no. Surely you will find a *Pulci* in London.

Yours truly,

B.

P.S.—Write an answer suddenly. I sent you last week the two Cantos of *D. J.* Respond. Show this translation to Frere, and *Rose*, and Hobhouse.

## 778.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, March 1, 1820.

DEAR MURRAY,—I sent you by last post the translation of the first Canto of the *Morgante Maggiore*, and the week before the 3rd and 4th Cantos of *D*[*on*] *J*[*uan*]. In the translation I wish you to ask Rose about the words *Sbergo*, i.e. *Usbergo*, which I have translated "Cuirass:" I suspect that it means *helmet* also. Now, if so, which of the senses is best accordant with the text? I have adopted Cuirass,[1] but will be amenable to reasons. Of the Natives, some say one, and some t'other: but they are no great Tuscans in Romagna. However, I will ask Sgricci (the famous Improvisatore) tomorrow, who is a native of Arezzo.[2] The Countess Guiccioli,

1. In Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*, Canto I. stanza 84, are the lines—

"Morgante va rovistando ogni cosa,
Ma solo un certo sbergo gli fu buono,
Ch'avea tutta la maglia rugginosa."

Byron translates thus—

"Morgante rummaged piecemeal from the dust
The whole, which, save one cuirass, was too small,
And that too had the mail inlaid with rust."

2. "Theodore Hook," said Byron (Medwin's *Conversations*, pp. 205–220), "is an improvisatore." "The greatest genius in that way "that perhaps Italy ever produced," said Shelley, "is Sgricci." "There is a great deal of knack in these gentry," replied Lord

Digitized by Google

who is reckoned a very cultivated young lady, and the dictionary, say *Cuirass*. I have written Cuirass, but *helmet* runs in my head nevertheless—and will run in verse very well, whilk is the principal point. I will ask the Sposa Spina Spinelli, too, the Florentine bride of Count Gabriel Rasponi, just imported from Florence, and get the sense out of Somebody.

I have just been visiting the new Cardinal,[1] who arrived the day before yesterday in his legation: he seems a good old gentleman, pious and simple, and not like his predecessor, who was a *bon vivant*, in the worldly sense of the words.

Enclosed is a letter which I received some time ago from Dallas. It will explain itself: I have not answered it. This comes of doing people good. At one time or another (including copy-rights) this person has had about fourteen hundred pounds of my money, and he writes what he calls a posthumous work about me, and a scrubby letter accusing me of treating him ill, when I never did any such thing. It is true that I left off letter writing, as I have done with almost every body else; but I can't see how that was misusing him.

I look upon his epistle as the consequence of my not sending him another hundred pounds, which he wrote to me for about two years ago, and which I thought proper to withhold, he having had his share, methought, of what I could dispone upon others.

Byron: "their poetry is more mechanical than you suppose. . . ." "But Sgricci! To extemporize a whole tragedy seems a miraculous "gift. I heard him improvise a five-act play at Lucca, on the "subject of the Iphigenia in Tauris, and never was more interested. "He put one of the finest speeches into the mouth of Iphigenia I "ever heard," etc., etc.

Sgricci, the son of a surgeon, born at Arezzo in 1788, died at Florence in July, 1836, a pensioner of the Grand-Duke.

1. Cardinal Antonio Rusconi (1819–24).

Digitized by Google

In your last you ask me after my articles of domestic wants. I believe they are as usual: the bull-dogs, Magnesia, Soda powders, tooth-powder, brushes, and anything of the kind which are here unattainable. You still ask me to return to England. Alas! to what purpose? You do not know what you are requiring. Return I must, probably, some day or other (if I live), sooner or later; but it will not be for pleasure, nor can it end in good. You enquire after my health and SPIRITS in large letters: my health can't be very bad, for I cured myself of a sharp Tertian Ague, in three weeks, with cold water, which had held my stoutest Gondolier for months, notwithstanding all the Bark of the Apothecary,—a circumstance which surprized Dr. Aglietti, who said it was a proof of great Stamina, particularly in so epidemic a Season. I did it out of dislike to the taste of Bark (which I can't bear), and succeeded, contrary to the prophecies of every body, by simply taking nothing at all. As to *Spirits*, they are unequal, now high, now low, like other people's I suppose, and depending upon circumstances.

Pray send me W. Scott's new novels. What are their names and characters? I read some of his former ones, at least once a day, for an hour or so. The last are too hurried: he forgets Ravenswood's name, and calls him *Edgar* and then *Norman;* and Girder, the Cooper, is styled now *Gilbert*, and now *John;* and he don't make enough of Montrose; but Dalgetty is excellent, and so is Lucy Ashton, and the bitch her mother. What is *Ivanhoe*?[1] and what do you call his other? are there *two*? Pray make him write at least two a year: I like no reading so well.

Don't forget to answer forthwith, for I wish to hear

1. *Ivanhoe* and *The Monastery* were both published in 1820.

Digitized by Google

of the arrival of the packets; viz. the two Cantos of *Donny Johnny*, and the translation from *Morgante Maggiore*, or Major Morgan.

Have you sent the letter to Moore? Why do you abuse the *Edin. Magazine* and Wilson? Last year you were loud and long in praise of both, and now you damnify them. You are somewhat *capricious*, as we say here in Romagna, when a woman has more than the usual staff establishment of Aides de *Cons*.

The editor of the *Bologna Telegraph* has sent me a paper with extracts from Mr. Mulock's [1] (his name always reminds me of Muley Moloch of Morocco) *Atheism Answered*, in which there is a long eulogium of my poesy, and a great *compatimento* for my misery. I never could understand what they mean by accusing me of irreligion: however, they may have it their own way. This Gentleman seems to be my great admirer; so I take what he says in good part, as he evidently intends kindness, to which I can't accuse myself of being insensible.

Yours ever,

B.

## 779.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, March 5, 1820.

DEAR MURRAY,—In case, in your country, you should not readily lay hands on the *Morgante Maggiore*, I send you the original text of the 1st Canto, to correspond with the translation which I sent you a few days

1. Thomas Mulock, of Magdalen Hall, author of several theological and political tracts, was, at this time, living at Geneva, and delivering a course of Lectures on English Literature. (For the passages in his *Answer to Atheism*, to which Byron refers, see Appendix X.)

Digitized by Google

ago. It is from the Naples Edition in Quarto of 1732, —*dated Florence*, however, by a trick of *the trade*, which you, as one of the Allied Sovereigns of the profession, will perfectly understand without any further *Spiegazione*.

It is strange that here nobody understands the real precise meaning of "*Sbergo*," or "*Usbergo*,"[1] an old Tuscan word, which I have rendered *Cuirass* (but am not sure it is not *helmet*). I have asked at least twenty people, learned and ignorant, male and female, including poets, and officers civil and military. The Dictionary says *Cuirass*, but gives no authority;[2] and a female friend of mine says *positively Cuirass*, which makes me doubt the fact still more than before. Ginguené says *bonnet de Fer*,[3] with the usual superficial decision of a Frenchman, so that I can't believe him: and what between The Dictionary, the Italian woman, and the Frenchman, there is no trusting to a word they say. The Context, too, which should decide, admits of either meaning equally, as you will perceive. Ask Rose, Hobhouse, Merivale, and Foscolo, and vote with the Majority. Is Frere a good Tuscan? if he be, bother him too. I have tried, you see, to be as accurate as I well could. This is my third or fourth letter, or packet, within the last twenty days.

1. "It has been suggested to me that usbergo is obviously the "same as hauberk, habergeon, etc., all from the German *halsberg*, "or covering of the neck" (Moore).

2. In Alberti di Villanuova's *Dizionario universale* (1797–1805) an authority is quoted, which, from the words, "in dosso," might have settled Byron's difficulty—

> "Dopo l'arnese l'usbergo brunito
> Gli pose in dosso, e cinse il brando al fiancho."

3. "Morgant suit le paladin à pied, n'ayant pour armes qu'un "vieux bonnet de fer rouillé et une longue épée."—P. L. Ginguené, *Histoire Littéraire d'Italie*, tom. iv. ed. 1811–19, p. 219.



Digitized by Google

## 780.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, March 14, 1820.

DEAR MURRAY,—Enclosed is *Dante's Prophecy—Vision*—or what not.[1] Where I have left more than *one* reading (which I have done often), you may adopt that which Gifford, Frere, Rose, and Hobhouse (is he still in Newgate?), and others of your Utican Senate think the best or least bad; the preface will explain all that is explicable. These are but the four first cantos: if approved, I will go on like Isaiah.

Pray mind in printing; and let some good Italian Scholar correct the Italian quotations.

Four days ago I was overturned in an open carriage between the river and a steep bank:—wheels dashed to pieces, slight bruises, narrow escape, and all that; but no harm done, though Coachman, footman, horses, and vehicle, were all mixed together like Maccaroni. It was owing to bad driving, as I say; but the Coachman swears to a start on the part of the horses: we went against a post on the verge of a steep bank, and capsized. I usually go out of the town in a carriage, and meet the saddle horses at the bridge: it was in going there that we boggled; but I got my ride, as usual, after the accident. They say here it was all owing to St. Antonio, of Padua, (serious, I assure you), who does thirteen miracles a day, that worse did not come of it. I have no objection to this being his fourteenth in the four and twenty hours. He presides over overturns and all escapes therefrom, it seems: and they dedicate pictures, etc., to him, as the Sailors once did to Neptune, after "the high Roman Fashion."

Yours, in haste,

B.

1. Published April 21, 1821, with *Marino Faliero*.

Digitized by Google

P.S.—Write directly. I have sent you *Don Juan;* Translation of *Morgante Maggiore*, and now Dante's, etc. Acknowledge all.

## 781.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, March 20, 1820.

D^r^ MURRAY,—Last post I sent you *The Vision of Dante*,—four first cantos. Enclosed you will find, *line for line*, in *third rhyme* (*terza rima*,) of which your British Blackguard reader as yet understands nothing, Fanny of Rimini.[1] You know that she was born here, and married, and slain, from Cary, Boyd, and such people already. I have done it into *cramp* English, line for line, and rhyme for rhyme, to try the possibility. You had best append it to the poems already sent by last three posts. I shall not allow you to play the tricks you did last year, with the prose[2] you *post*-scribed to *Mazeppa*, which I sent to you *not* to be published, if not in a periodical paper,—and there you tacked it, without a word of explanation and be damned to you. If this is published, publish it *with the original*, and *together* with the *Pulci* translation, *or* the *Dante Imitation*. I suppose you have both by now, and the *Juan* long before.

Yours,

B.

1. Dante, in his *Inferno* (Canto V.), places Francesca and her lover Paolo among the Lustful in the second Circle of Hell. Francesca, daughter of Guido Vecchio da Polenta, Lord of Ravenna, married (circ. 1275) Gianciotto, second son of Malatesta da Verrucchio, Lord of Rimini. She became enamoured of Gianciotto's younger brother Paolo, and the lovers, surprised together by her husband, were killed. Byron's lines were not published till 1830.

2. The fragment of Byron's novel (see *Letters*, vol. iii. pp. 449-453).

Digitized by Google

"FRANCESCA OF RIMINI.

"*Translation from the Inferno of Dante, Canto 5th.*

"'The Land where I was born sits by the Seas,
Upon that shore to which the Po descends,
With all his followers, in search of peace.
Love, which the gentle heart soon apprehends,
Seized him for the fair person which was ta'en
From me, and me even yet the mode offends.
Love, who to none beloved to love again
Remits, seized me with wish to please, so strong,
That, as thou see'st, yet, yet it doth remain.
Love to one death conducted us along,
But Caina waits for him our life who ended:'
These were the accents utter'd by her tongue.—
Since I first listened to these Souls offended,
I bow'd my visage and so kept it till—
'What think'st thou?' said the bard; {*then* / when} I unbended,
And recommenced: 'Alas! unto such ill
How many sweet thoughts, what strong extacies
Led these their evil fortune to fulfill!'
And then I turned unto their side my eyes,
And said, 'Francesca, thy sad destinies
Have made me sorrow till the tears arise.
But tell me, in the Season of sweet sighs,
By what and how thy Love to Passion rose,
So as his dim desires to recognise?'
Then she to me: 'The greatest of all woes
Is to {*recall to mind* / remind us of} our happy days
In misery, and {*this* / that} thy teacher knows.

Digitized by Google

But if to learn our passion's first root preys
Upon thy spirit with such Sympathy,
I will { *relate* / do * even } as he who weeps and says.—
We read one day for pastime, seated nigh,
Of Lancilot, how Love enchained him too.
We were alone, quite unsuspiciously,
But oft our eyes met, and our Cheeks in hue
All o'er discolour'd by that reading were;
But one point only wholly { *overthrew* / us o'erthrew; }
When we read the { *desired* / long-sighed-for } smile of her,
To be thus kist by such { *a fervent* / devoted } lover,
He, who from me can be divided ne'er,
Kissed my mouth, trembling in the act all over.
Accursed was the book and he who wrote!
That day no further leaf we did uncover.—
While thus one Spirit told us of their lot,
The other wept so, that with pity's thralls
I swoon'd as if by death I had been smote,
And fell down even as a dead body falls.'"

March 20th 1820.
Ravenna.

## 782.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, March 23, 1820.

DEAR MURRAY,—I have received your letter of the 7th. Besides the 4 packets you have already received, I

* "In some of the editions it is 'diro,' in others 'faro;'—an "essential difference between 'saying' and 'doing,' which I know "not how to decide. Ask Foscolo. The d——d editions drive me "mad."

Digitized by Google

have sent the Pulci a few days after, and since (a few days ago) the 4 first Cantos of Dante's prophecy, (the best thing I ever wrote, if it be not *unintelligible*,) and by last post a *literal* translation, word for word (versed like the original), of the episode of Francesca of Rimini. I want to hear what you think of the new Juans, and the translations, and the Vision: they are all things that are, or ought to be, very different from one another.

If you choose to make a print from the Venetian, you may; but she don't correspond at all to the character you mean her to represent. On the contrary, the Contessa G. does (except that she is remarkably fair), and is much prettier than the Fornarina; but I have no picture of her except a miniature, which is very ill done; and, besides, it would not be proper, on any account whatever, to make such a use of it, even if you had a copy.

Pray give *Hobhouse* the enclosed song, and tell him I know he will never forgive me, but I could not help it. I am so provoked with him and his ragamuffins for putting him in *quod:* he will understand that word, being now resident in the flash capital.

I am now foaming an answer (in prose) to the Blackwood Article of last August:[1] you shall have it when done; it will set the kiln in a low.

Recollect that the *two* new Cantos only count with us for *one*. You may put the Pulci and Dante together: perhaps that were best. So you have put *your* name to Juan, after all your panic, and the row: you are a rare fellow. I must now put myself in a passion to continue my prose.

Yours, etc.

1. See Appendix IX.

Digitized by Google

Saturday, March 25th 1820.

I have caused write to Thorwalsen. Pray be careful in sending my daughter's picture—I mean, that it be not hurt in the carriage, for it is a journey rather long and jolting.

NEW SONG[1] TO THE TUNE OF

*"Whare hae ye been a' day,*
*My boy Tammy O?*
*Courting o' a young thing,*
*Just come frae her Mammie O?"*

1.

How came you in Hob's pound to cool,
My boy Hobbie O?
Because I bade the people pull
The House into the Lobby O.

2.

What did the House upon this call,
My boy Hobbie O?
They voted me to Newgate all,
Which is an awkward Jobby O.

3.

Who are now the people's men,
My boy Hobby O?
There's I and Burdett—Gentlemen,
And blackguard Hunt and Cobby O.

1. This ballad was first published in *Murray's Magazine* for March, 1887, pp. 292, 293. (For Hobhouse's Letter to John Murray on this ballad, and for the version which appeared in the *Morning Post*, see Appendix XI.)

Digitized by Google

4.

You hate the house—why canvass, then
My boy Hobbie O?
Because I would reform the den
As member for the Mobby O.

5.

Wherefore do you hate the Whigs,
My boy Hobbie O?
Because they want to run their rigs,
As under Walpole Bobby O.

6.

But when we at Cambridge were,
My boy Hobbie O,
If my memory don't err,
You founded a Whig Clubbie O.

7.

When to the mob you make a speech,
My boy Hobbie O,
How do you keep without their reach
The watch within your fobby O?

8.

But never mind such petty things,
My boy Hobbie O;
God save the people—damn all Kings,
So let us crown the Mobby O!

Yours truly,
(Signed) *Infidus Scurra.*
March 23rd, 1820

Digitized by Google

## 783.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, March 28, 1820.

D^r M^r,—Inclosed is a "Screed of Doctrine for you," of which I will trouble you to acknowledge the receipt by next post. Mr. Hobhouse must have the correction of it for the press: you may show it first to whom you please.

I wish to know what became of my two Epistles from St. Paul (translated from the Armenian three years ago and more), and of the letter to Roberts of last autumn, which you never have even alluded to? There are two packets with this.

Yours,
B.

P.S.—I have some thoughts of publishing the "*Hints "from Horace*,"[1] written ten years ago,—if Hobhouse can rummage them out of my papers left at his father's, —with some omissions and alterations previously to be made when I see the proofs.

## 784.—To John Murray.

Ravenna, March 29, 1820.

DEAR MURRAY,—I sent you yesterday eight sheets of answer to Jack Wilson and the *Edin. Mag.* of last August.

Herewith you will receive a note (enclosed) on Pope, which you will find tally with a part of the text of last Post. I have at last lost all patience with the atrocious cant and nonsense about Pope, with which our present blackguards are overflowing, and am determined to make such head against it as an Individual can, by prose or verse; and I will at least do it with good will. There is no bearing it any longer; and if it goes on, it will

1. See *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 23, *note* 1.

Digitized by Google

destroy what little good writing or taste remains amongst us. I hope there are still a few men of taste to second me; but if not, I'll battle it alone, convinced that it is in the best cause of English literature.

I have sent you so many packets, verse and prose, lately, that you will be tired of the postage, if not of the perusal. I want to answer some parts of your last letter, but I have not time, for I must "boot and saddle," as my Captain Craigengelt[1] (an officer of the old Napoleon Italian army) is in waiting, and my Groom and cattle to boot.

You have given me a screed of Metaphor and what not about *Pulci*, and manners, and "going *without clothes* "like our Saxon ancestors." Now, the *Saxons did not go* without cloathes; and, in the next place, they are *not* my ancestors, nor yours either; for mine were Normans, and yours, I take it by your name, were *Gael*. And, in the next, I differ from you about the "refinement" which has banished the comedies of Congreve. Are not the Comedies of *Sheridan* acted to the thinnest houses? I *know* (as *ex-Committed*) that *the School for Scandal* was the *worst Stock piece* upon record. I also know that Congreve gave up writing because Mrs. Centlivre's balderdash drove his comedies off.[2] So it is not *decency*,

1. Bucklaw's associate in the *Bride of Lammermoor*.

2. Susanna Centlivre, born about 1680 (*Biographia Dramatica*, vol. i. p. 97), died December 1, 1723, wrote 19 plays, of which two, *The Busy Body* (1709) and *The Wonder* (1714), were the most successful. In the life of Mrs. Centlivre given in the *Biographia Dramatica* (pp. 97–100), the success of the *Busy Body* is noticed, while "Mr. Congreve's *Way of the World*, which perhaps contains "more true intrinsic wit, and unexceptionable accuracy of language, "than any dramatic piece ever written, . . . could scarcely make "its way at all." The article goes on to say that Wilks, the actor, "made use of this remarkable expression with regard to her *Bold* "*Stroke for a Wife*, viz. *that not only her play would be damned*, "*but she herself be damned for writing it.*"

Robert Wilks first appeared on the stage at Dublin in 1691. He

Digitized by Google

but Stupidity, that does all this; for Sheridan is as *decent* a writer as need be, and Congreve no worse than Mrs. Centlivre, of whom Wilks (the Actor) said, "not only her "play would be damned, but She too." He alluded to a *Bold Stroke for a Wife*. But last, and most to the purpose, Pulci is *not* an *indecent* writer—at least in his first Canto, as you will have perceived by this time.

You talk of *refinement*:—are you all *more* moral? are you *so* moral? No such thing. *I* know what the World is in England, by my own proper experience of the best of it—at least of the loftiest. And I have described it every where as it is to be found in all places.

But to return. I should like to see the *proofs* of mine Answer, because there will be something to omit or to alter; but pray let it be carefully printed. When convenient let me have an answer.

Yours,

B.

## 785.—To Richard Belgrave Hoppner.

Ravenna, March 31, 1820.

* * * *

Ravenna continues much the same as I described it. Conversazioni all Lent, and much better ones than any at Venice. There are small games at hazard, that is, faro, where nobody can point more than a shilling or

came to London, and acted "Palamede" in *Marriage à-la-Mode*, in 1698, at Drury Lane. There he also made his last appearance, as "Don Pedro" in *Mistake* (May 15, 1732). He died September 27, 1732. A list of his characters is given by Genest (*English Stage*, vol. iii. pp. 339-342). In Disraeli's *Curiosities of Literature* (ed. 1865, vol. ii. p. 376) reference is made to the great difficulty which Mrs. Centlivre had in getting "her *Busy Body* performed. Wilks "threw down his part with an oath of detestation—our comic "authoress fell on her knees and wept.—Her tears, and not her wit, "prevailed."

Digitized by Google

two;—other card-tables, and as much talk and coffee as you please. Every body does and says what they please; and I do not recollect any disagreeable events, except being three times falsely accused of flirtation, and once being robbed of six sixpences by a nobleman of the city, a Count * * *. I did not suspect the illustrious delinquent; but the Countess V * * * and the Marquis L * * * told me of it directly, and also that it was a way he had, of filching money when he saw it before him; but I did not *ax* him for the cash, but contented myself with telling him that if he did it again, I should anticipate the law.

There is to be a theatre in April, and a fair, and an opera, and another opera in June, besides the fine weather of nature's giving, and the rides in the Forest of Pine. With my best respects to Mrs. Hoppner,

Believe me ever, etc.,

BYRON.

P.S.—Could you give me an item of what books remain at Venice? I *don't* want them, but want to know whether the few that are not here are there, and were not lost by the way. I hope and trust you have got all your wine safe, and that it is drinkable. Allegra is prettier, I think, but as obstinate as a mule, and as ravenous as a vulture; health good, to judge of the complexion—temper tolerable, but for vanity and pertinacity. She thinks herself handsome, and will do as she pleases.

Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX I.

## TRANSLATIONS FROM THE ARMENIAN.

(See p. 9, *note* 1.)

Two Epistles from the Armenian Version,[1] and the "Pleasure "Houses of Byzantium."

### (1) "THE EPISTLE OF THE CORINTHIANS TO ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE."[2]

"1. STEPHEN,[3] and the Elders with him, Dabnus, Eubulus, Theophilus, and Xinon, to Paul, our Father and Evangelist, and faithful Master in Jesus Christ, health.[4]

"2. Two men have come to Corinth, Simon by name, and Cleobus ['Clebus,' *A.*],[5] who vehemently disturb the faith of some with deceitful and corrupt words;

"3. Of which words thou should'st inform thyself:

"4. For neither have we heard such words from thee, nor from the other apostles:

"5. But we know only that what we have heard from thee and from them, that we have kept firmly.

"6. But in this chiefly has our Lord had compassion, that,

---

1. On a copy of these Epistles, in the possession of Moore, Byron has written—"Done into English by me, January—February, 1817, at the Convent of St. Lazaro, with the aid and exposition of the Armenian text by the Father Paschal Aucher, Armenian Friar.—BYRON. Venice, April 10, 1817. I had also the Latin text, but it is in many places very corrupt, and with great omissions." The version has been compared with that given by Aucher, and the differences are noted in the text thus [*A.*]. The notes are those given in Moore's *Life* (1830), vol. ii. pp. 809–813.

2. Some MSS. have the title thus: *Epistle of Stephen the Elder to Paul the Apostle, from the Corinthians.*

3. In the MSS. the marginal verses published by the Whistons are wanting.

4. In some MSS. we find, *The elders Numenus, Eubulus, Theophilus, and Nomeson, to Paul their brother, health!*

5. Others read, *There came certain men, . . . and Clobeus, who vehemently shake.*

Digitized by Google

whilst thou art yet with us in the flesh, we are again about to hear from thee.

"7. Therefore do thou write to us, or come thyself amongst us quickly;

"8. we believe in the Lord, that, as it was revealed to Theonas, he hath delivered thee from the hands of the unrighteous.[1]

"9. But these are the sinful words of these impure men, for thus do they say and teach:

"10. That it behoves not to admit the Prophets;[2]

"11. neither do they affirm the omnipotence of God:

"12. neither do they affirm the resurrection of the flesh:

"13. neither do they affirm that man was altogether created by God:

"14. neither do they affirm that Jesus Christ was born in the flesh from the Virgin Mary:

"15. neither do they affirm that the world was the work of God, but of some one of the Angels.

"16. Therefore do thou make haste[3] to come amongst us;

"17. that this city of the Corinthians may remain without scandal;

"18. and that the folly of these men may be made manifest by an open refutation. Fare thee well.[4]

"The deacons Thereptus and Tichus[5] received and conveyed the Epistle to the city of the Philippians.[6]

"When Paul received the Epistle, although he was then in chains on account of Stratonice[7] ['Statonice,' *A.*], the wife of Apofolanus,[8] yet as it were forgetting his bonds, he mourned over these words, and said, weeping: 'It were better for me to be dead, and with the Lord. For while I am in this body, and hear the wretched words of such false doctrine, behold, grief arises upon grief, and my ['this,' *A.*] trouble adds a weight to my chains; when I behold this calamity, and progress of the machinations of Satan, who searcheth to do wrong.'

"And thus, with deep affliction, Paul composed his reply to the Epistle.[9]

---

1. Some MSS. have, *We believe in the Lord, that his presence was made manifest; and by this hath the Lord delivered us from the hands of the unrighteous.*

2. Others read, *To read the Prophets.*

3. Some MSS. have, *Therefore, brother, do thou make haste.*

4. Others read, *Fare thee well in the Lord.*

5. Some MSS. have, *The deacons Therepus and Techus.*

6. The Whistons have, *To the city of Phœnicia:* but in all the MSS. we find, *To the city of the Philippians.*

7. Others read, *On account of Onotice.*

8. The Whistons have, *Of Apollophanus:* but in all the MSS. we read, *Apofolanus.*

9. In the text of this Epistle there are some other variations in the words, but the sense is the same.

Digitized by Google

(2) "EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS.[1]

"1. Paul, in bonds for Jesus Christ, disturbed by so many errors,[2] to his Corinthian brethren, Health.

"2. I nothing marvel that the preachers of evil have made this progress.

"3. For because the Lord Jesus is about to fulfil his coming, verily on this account do certain men pervert and despise his words.

"4. But I, verily, from the beginning, have taught you that only which I myself received from the former Apostles, who always remained with the Lord Jesus Christ.

"5. And I now say unto you, that the Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, who was of the seed of David,

"6. according to the annunciation of the Holy Ghost, sent to her by our Father from heaven;

"7. that Jesus might be introduced into the world,[3] and deliver our flesh by his flesh, and that he might raise us up from the dead:

"8. as in this also he himself became the example.

"9. That it might be made manifest that man was created by the Father,

"10. he has not remained in perdition unsought;[4]

"11. but he is sought for, that he might be revived by adoption.

"12. For God, who is the Lord of all, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who made heaven and earth, sent, firstly ['first,' *A.*], the Prophets to the Jews:

"13. That he would absolve them from their sins, and bring them to his judgment ['justice,' *A.*].

"14. Because he wished to save, firstly, the house of Israel, he bestowed and poured forth his Spirit upon the Prophets;

"15. that they should, for a long time, preach the worship of God, and the Nativity of Christ.

"16. But he who was the prince of evil, when he wished to make himself God, laid his hand upon them,

"17. and bound all men in sin,[5]

"18. because the judgment of the world was approaching.

"19. But Almighty God, when he willed to justify, was unwilling to abandon his creature;

"20. but when he saw his affliction, he had compassion upon him:

"21. and at the end of a ['the,' *A.*] time he sent the Holy Ghost into the Virgin foretold by the Prophets.

---

1. Some MSS. have, *Paul's Epistle from prison, for the instruction of the Corinthians.*
2. Others read, *Disturbed by various compunctions.*
3. Some MSS. have, *That Jesus might comfort the world.*
4. Others read, *He has not remained indifferent.*
5. Some MSS. have, *Laid his hand, and them and all body bound in sin.*

Digitized by Google

"22. Who, believing readily,[1] was made worthy to conceive, and bring forth our Lord Jesus Christ.

"23. That from this perishable body, in which the evil Spirit was glorified, he should be cast out ['reproved,' *A.*], and it should be made manifest ['manifested,' *A.*]

"24. that he was not God. For Jesus Christ, in his flesh, had recalled and saved this perishable flesh, and drawn it into eternal life by faith.

"25. Because in his body he would ['should,' *A.*] prepare a pure temple of justice for all ages;

"26. in whom we also, when we believe, are saved.

"27. Therefore know ye that these men are not the children of justice, but the children of wrath;

"28. who turn away from themselves the compassion of God;

"29. who say that neither the heavens nor the earth were altogether works made by the hand of the Father of all things.[2]

"30. But these cursed men[3] have the doctrine of the Serpent.

"31. But do ye, by the power of God, withdraw yourselves far from these, and expel from amongst you the doctrine of the wicked.

"32. Because you are not the children of rebellion,[4] but the sons of the beloved Church.

"33. And on this account the time of the resurrection is preached to all men.

"34. Therefore they who affirm that there is no resurrection of the flesh, they indeed shall not be raised up to eternal life;

"35. but to judgment and condemnation shall the unbeliever arise in the flesh:

"36. for to that body which denies the resurrection of the body, shall be denied the resurrection: because such are found to refuse the resurrection.

"37. But you also, Corinthians! have known, from the seeds of wheat, and from other seeds,

"38. that one grain falls[5] dry into the earth, and within it first dies,

"39. and afterwards rises again, by the will of the Lord, endued with the same body;

"40. neither indeed does it arise with the same simple body, but manifold, and filled with blessing.

"41. But we ['must,' *A.*] produce the example not only from seeds, but from the honourable bodies of men.[6]

"42. Ye have also known Jonas, the son of Amittai;[7]

---

1. Others read, *Believing with a pure heart.*
2. Some MSS. have, *Of God the Father of all things.*
3. Others read, *They curse themselves in this thing.*
4. Others read, *Children of the disobedient.*
5. Some MSS. have, *That one grain falls not dry into the earth.*
6. Others read, *But we have not only produced from seeds, but from the honourable body of man.*
7. Others read, *The son of Ematthius.*

Digitized by Google

"43. because he delayed to preach to the Ninevites, he was swallowed up in the belly of a fish for three days and three nights:

"44. and after three days God heard his supplication, and brought him out of the deep abyss;

"45. neither was any part of his body corrupted, neither was his eyebrow bent down;[1]

"46. and how much more for you, oh men of little faith!

"47. If you believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, will he raise you up, even as he himself hath arisen.

"48. If the bones of Elisha the prophet, falling upon the dead, revived the dead,

"49. by how much more shall ye, who are supported by the flesh and the blood and the Spirit of Christ, arise again on that day, with a perfect body?

"50. Elias the prophet, embracing the widow's son, raised him from the dead:

"51. by how much more shall Jesus Christ revive you, on that day, with a perfect body, even as he himself hath arisen?

"52. But if ye receive other things vainly,[2]

"53. henceforth no one shall cause me to travail; for I bear on my body these fetters ['bonds,' *A.*],[3]

"54. to obtain Christ; and I suffer with patience these afflictions to become worthy of the resurrection of the dead.

"55. And do each of you, having received the law from the hands of the blessed Prophets and the holy Gospel,[4] firmly maintain it;

"56. to the end that you may be rewarded in the resurrection of the dead, and the possession of the life eternal.

"57. But if any of ye, not believing, shall trespass, he shall be judged with the misdoers, and punished with those who have false belief.

"58. Because such are the generation of vipers, and the children of dragons and basilisks.

"59. Drive far from amongst ye, and fly from such, with the aid of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"60. And the peace and grace of the beloved Son be upon ['with,' *A.*] you.[5] Amen."

---

1. Others add, *Nor did a hair of his body fall therefrom.*
2. Some MSS. have, *Ye shall not receive other things in vain.*
3. Others finished here thus, *Henceforth no one can trouble me farther, for I bear in my body the sufferings of Christ. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, my brethren. Amen.*
4. Some MSS. have, *Of the holy evangelist.*
5. Others add, *Our Lord be with ye all. Amen.*



Digitized by Google

(3) "THE PLEASURE HOUSES OF THE SUMMER OF BYZANTIUM.

"*Prologue.*

"Stanza 1.

"The enthusiasm of the poet should be great, and his song sweet, to sing the beauties of the Byzantine strait, to describe to the life, with my feeble pen, this most lovely work of the Creator.

2.

"Thy sweet view, and pleasant place, inflames the thoughts of the poet; the voice of the bard to his lyre shall renew and multiply thy creation.

3.

"Because, being upon this throne of Nature, thou appearest as a nuptial chamber; but the lyre of song and the voice of the bard shall present thee to the view of the world.

4.

"Inspire my soul, thou awakening Spirit, who walkest in delicious places: teach me to transport, according to my art, the material being of these beauties in the immortality of words.

5.

"That dazzling dew of Heaven, rain upon me! breathe that Spirit upon me, which from the creation conducts to the Creator, and from the things made gives Glory to the Maker.

"*Canto* I.

1.

"I was ignorant of the grandeur of the earth;
"I did not know the sites of the ocean and earth. The limits of the horizon bounded at once my view and my imagination of things.

2.

"The voice comes upon me—the voice of Nature. To me who am a being endowed with reason and her master—to walk the world, to discover the loveliest abode of Summer.

3.

"Reason teaches me not to weaken with fatigue my feeble body; I will mount a car, drawn by horses.

4.

"I stood firm, but the car moved. So swiftly that I believed myself a bird of Heaven.

Digitized by Google

5.

"First I moved on the land—on her four departments—the fields, the valleys, the woods, and mountains; because the caverns and excavations are out of this order.

6.

"All these are pleasing to my heart; but when walking in the field I did not in the valley, nor in the wood did I behold the mountain.

7.

"In this manner I arrive at the top of the mountain, near which I behold a plain and valley, and a vast field near the wood; and heard the murmur of living waters.

8.

"So much did the aspect of these four views make me wonder; and according to the multitude of objects I appeared to multiply my being.

9.

"Because I enlarged my spirit in pervading this place of Summer, not yet knowing the delight of Ocean.

10.

"Afterwards with a raft I voyaged; and this invention appeared more wonderful: and with a sail constructed from a plant I advanced faster than before.

11.

"I did not perceive the motion of the raft, nor even my own; and while you think yourself standing still, you arrive in port.

12.

"I have penetrated to the middle of the watery abyss with this raft: the immense element—I passed over it's watery mountains and valleys, but always fluctuating.

13.

"The Ocean hath it's Mountains, as the Earth, plain and field, of azure hue—greater than those of the Earth; but when the waves become a plain, they lose their mountains.

14.

"And when it became a rough mountain, it quickly destroyed the smoothness of the plain; and my heart was not delighted with this spectacle, but trembled at the deep abyss.

15.

"I introduce myself to this strait, between the Pontus and Propontis, and renewed the line of my horizon with an ample view.

Digitized by Google

16.

"Because there was the delicious view on my left hand and that on my right hand also; and I was conveyed in a self moving vessel—saw five views at once.

17.

"The plain, the valley, the mountain, the leafy grove, and the sea; my eyes are on the earth, my feet on the sea—half on sea and half on shore."

Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX II.

## COUNTESS ALBRIZZI'S CHARACTER OF BYRON.

(See p. 14, *note* 1.)

1. *Ritratti Scritti da Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi* (*Quarta Edizione*, Pisa, 1826, pp. 93–103).

"RITRATTO XXIII.

"'Toi, dont le monde encore ignore le vrai nom,
Esprit mistérieux, mortel, ange, ou démon,
Qui que tu sois, Byron, bon, ou fatal génie,
J'aime de tes concerts la sauvage harmonie,
Comme j'aime le bruit de la foudre, et des vents,
Se mêlant dans l'orage à la voix des torrents.'
LAMARTINE.

"Poco sarebbe dire del volto qual raggio di bellezza vi rilucesse, dacchè tanta vi si ammirava espressione di un animo straordinario; quale serenità sulla fronte, cui adornavano finissimi capelli color del castagno; leggerissimi, ricciutelli, con quell' arte accomodati, che l'arte nasconde imitando un' aggradevole natura! Che volger d'occhi! erano essi del colore azzurro del Cielo donde sembrano trarre l'origine. I denti e nella forma, e nel colore, e nella lucentezza s'agguagliavano alle perle: ma le guancie troppo sfumatamente tingevansi nel colore di pallida rosa. Il collo, che egli avea l'abitudine di tenere scoperto quanto la decenza permettevalo, sembrava fatto al torno, ed era bianchissimo. Belle quanto l'arte può farle erano le sue mani. La fisonomia ti compariva tranquilla come l'onda in un bel mattino di primavera: ma come quella ad un tratto mutavasi in tempestosa e terribile, se una passione (che dico una passione?) un pensiero, un detto a commovere veniva l'animo suo. I suoi occhi allora perdevano ogni dolcezza, e scintillavano così, che malagevole riuscito sarebbe il fissarli. Non avresti creduto possibile un cangiamento sì rapido, ma ti conveniva pur confessare che lo stato naturale dell' animo suo, quello era della tempesta. La sua statura nulla lasciava a desiderare particolarmente a quelli, che trovavano piuttosto un vezzo che un difetto in certo leggero e lento dondolare della persona allorchè entrava in una stanza, del

Digitized by Google

quale però non ti sentivi punto tentato di ricercare la causa. Già difficilmente l'avresti riconosciuta, portando egli il vestito sì lungo da farne invidia all' augel di Giunone. Per le vie di Venezia non fu mai veduto a camminare, nè lungo le amene sponde del Brenta, ove pure passava alcune settimane della state: e v'ha perfino chi asserisce non avere egli mai veduto, che dalle finestre, quella meraviglia della Piazza di San-Marco: tanto poteva in lui la brama di non mostrarsi viziato in parte alcuna della persona! Io però sono di avviso che ammirata l'abbia anzi più volte, ma in ora tarda e solitaria, e allorquando i meravigliosi edifizi che la circondano illuminati dalla dolce e favorevole luce della Luna, appariscono mille volte più belli. Ciò, che un giorno grandemente piacevagli, l'indomani lo annojava: e quantunque apparisse costante nel seguire alcune abitudini, da non altro ciò provenira, che dalla profonda indifferenza, anzi dal disprezzo in cui tutte tenevale: quali esse si fossero non meritavano la pena ch' egli se ne occupasse. Il suo cuore era sommamente sensitivo, e lasciavasi oltre modo governare dalla simpatia: ma la sua immaginazione lo trasportava e guastava tutto. Credeva ai presentimenti, e compiacevasi ricordare chi aveva questa credenza comune con Napoleone. Sembra che quanto fu coltivata la sua educazione intellettuale, altrettanto sia stata negletta la sua educazione morale, e che non se gli abbia mai lasciato conoscere e sequire altra volontà che la sua propria. Nulladimeno, chi potrebbe persuadersi ch' egli avesse una timidezza costante e quasi infantile, della quale sì manifesti segni apparivano da rendere certo il fatto, malgrado la ripugnanza che provavasi in conciliare con Lord Byron un sentimento, che avesse l'apparenza della modestia. Conscio, siccome egli era, che, ovunque si presentasse tutti gli occhi si rivolgessero a lui, e tutte le labbra, quelle delle donne particolarmente, si schiudessero per dire 'eccolo, ecco Lord Byron,' egli naturalmente trovarsi doveva come un personaggio di teatro obbligato di rappresentare, e di rendere conto, non dirò agli altri, che di ciò poco curavasi, ma a se stesso, d'ogni suo movimento, d'ogni suo detto. Ciò gli cagionava un sentimento d'inquietudine, del quale ognuno chiaramente avvedevasi. Diceva egli ad un certo proposito (che nel mille ottocento quattordici era nella bocca di tutti), *che il mondo non valeva nè la pena di conquistarlo, nè il rammarico di perderlo*: il qual detto (se mai si potesse il valore di un' espressione equiparare a quello di molti e grandi fatti), mostrerebbe quasi più gigantesco e smisurato il pensare e il sentire di Byron, che quello di lui onde avea tema il discorso. Nulla dirò del suo valore poetico, di cui non credo ottimi giudici che i suoi concittadini. Essi asseriscono, ch' ei lasciò un vuoto immenso nella letteratura Britanna, che ne' suoi componimenti trattò tutti i soggetti, e toccò tutte le corde dell' arpa divina, traendone ora i più dolci, ed ora i più vibrati suoni, che udir si potessero. Poetando amava di venire ispirato, per così dire, dall' aria stessa dei luoghi ove occorsero o le vicende che voleva descrivere, o le situazioni che voleva dipingere; benchè avesse fedelissima la memoria e l'immaginazione pronta e ferace. Lo udii paragonare a Shakespeare e mettere come Garrik fra la Musa del riso e del pianto: benchè assai più di sovente e con maggiore

Digitized by Google

spontaneità e buon successo a quest' ultima si accostasse. I versi, ch' egli spesso dettava a corso di penna, erano altrettante lettere di cambio pagate a vista dal suo stampatore; ed è certo che quando usciva una sua opera, per quanto copiosa ne fosse l'edizione, era smaltita tutta nel giorno stesso. Fu tacciato di dipingere soventi volte, forse senza avvedersene, se stesso nei suoi personaggi: taccia da cui piuttosto cercò, che non riuscisse, difendersi. Nell' età di diciannove anni dicono che la sua riputazione letteraria fosse già colossale. Il secolo investillo e coperselo della sua nube tempestosa. La mania delle così dette opinioni liberali (parola che ognuno interpreta a sua fantasia, ciò che solo ne forma tutto l'incanto) non gettò in alcuna mente più profonde radici che nella sua. Basti dire, che essendo Lord e Pari della liberissima Inghilterra, riputavasi schiavo. Avrebbe voluto vivere in un governo ideale, poetico, scordandosi che Platone, comecchè per avventura il maggior poeta egli medesimo che vanti la politica, gli esclude tutti dalla sua Repubblica. I suoi esercizj ginnastici erano ora violenti, ed ora presso che nulli. Il suo corpo, siccome il suo spirito sapevano volonterosi piegarsi ad ogni sua volontà. Passò tutto un inverno uscendo di casa la mattina solo per condursi all' isoletta degli Armeni (una isoletta collocata nel mezzo della tranquilla laguna, e da Venezia non discosta che una mezza lega) per trattenersi in compagnia di quei dotti ed ospitali monaci onde apprendere la loro difficilissima lingua, e la sera di nuovo entrando nella sua bruna gondoletta, andava, ma solo per un pajo d'ore, in società. Un secondo inverno comunque le acque della laguna fossero fortemente agitate, vedevasi attraversarla, approdare nella più vicina terraferma, e stancare almeno due cavalli alla corsa. Non fu mai udito dire una parola Francese benchè perfettamente quell' idioma conoscesse. Odiava la nazione, e la moderna sua letteratura: siccome l'Italiana moderna letteratura disprezzava, la quale, ei diceva, vivente non possedere che un solo uomo; restrizione, non so se io dica più risibile, che falsa ed ingiuriosa. La sua voce era dolce e flessibile assai. Parlava con molta soavità se non era contradetto, ma più volontieri al suo vicino indirizzavasi che al crocchio intero. Scarsissimo bastavagli il cibo, e preferiva il pesce alle carni, per la singolare ragione che queste ultime, diceva egli, rendevanlo feroce. Non amava di vedere a cibarsi le donne, e conviene investigare la causa di questo suo stranissimo ribrezzo, nel timore in cui era sempre, che gli venisse perturbata quella immagine della loro perfezione, anzi natura quasi divina, che di esse compiacevasi nutrire. Essendo stato da esse sempre dominato, pare che lo stesso suo amor proprio amasse di rifugiarsi nella idea della loro eccellenza: sentimento che egli sapeva, Dio sa come! accordare col disprezzo in che tratto tratto poi, quasi a sfogo dell' animo suo, mostrava tenerle. Se non che, le contradizioni non devono sorprendere ne' caratteri pari a quello di Lord Byron: e poi chi non sa che lo schiavo odia sempre quello che gli sovrasta? Senza un' Ero, che all' opposta sponda lo attendesse, passò l'Ellesponto a nuoto pel solo desiderio di por fine alla controversia, se fosse o no possibile guardarlo. E le acque pure del Tago leggerissime, e per ciò appunto pericolose, nello stesso modo attraversò

Digitized by Google

là ove il fiume è più largo; impresa della quale maggiormente che della prima piacevasi. E per non uscire d'argomento, dirò, come fu veduto nel partire da un palazzo situato nel Canal-Grande, anzi che entrare nella propria gondoletta, gettarsi così vestito com' era nell' acqua e rientrare a nuoto al suo albergo. La notte vegnente poi, onde evitare il pericolo, che nella precedente aveva incorso, di essere ferito dagli spessi remi de' gondolieri, che nelle veloci barchette i proprj Signori riconducevano, come quello che intollerante era d'ogni ostaculo, fu veduto attraversare lo stesso canale nuotando con la destra, e tenendo alzata nella sinistra una fiaccola onde illuminare se stesso. Nè potrebbesi ridire, alla vista di sì straordinario peregrino quale fosse lo stupore de' pacifici gondolieri, i quali sdrajati sulle poppe delle loro gondolette attendevano, canterellando i bei versi di Erminia e della Biondina, che il vigile gallo salutasse il mattino: ora in cui nella state sogliono ripararsi in casa le notti-vaghe Venete Dame. Co' suoi domestici, da' quali non esigeva presso che nulla, era generoso, buono, affabile. Fra gli altri conduceva sempre seco un vecchio famiglio, perchè, diceva egli, avealo veduto nascere. Lord Byron odiava i suoi compatriotti, ma solo, perchè sapeva di essere da loro in fatto di morale disprezzato. Gl' Inglesi, rigidi osservatori dei doveri famigliari, non sapevano perdonargli di averne obliati, anzi calpestati i principali: quindi nè egli amava di essere a loro presentato, nè essi medesimi, quando erano particolarmente con le loro mogli, amavano farne la conoscenza. Era però grande in ognuno il desiderio di vederlo; e le Dame particolarmente, le quali non osavano guardarlo che di soppiatto, dicevano a bassa voce . . . è pur peccato! Se però qualche suo concittadino di alto grado e di alta riputazione era primo ad usargli cortesia, ei se ne mostrava palesemente lusingato, e piacevasi oltre modo d'intrattenersi seco. Pareva che alla piaga, la quale aperta stavagli sempre nel cuore ulcerato, tai lenitivi fossero quasi goccie di balsamo salutare, che lo riconfortavano. Parlando del suo maritaggio, tema dilicato, ma pure da lui gradito, se venivagli da voce amica, se ne mostrava tutto commosso, e diceva essere stato desso causa innocente d'ogni suo errore, d'ogni sua sciagura. Della moglie sua parlava con molto rispetto ed affetto. Diceva essere quella una Dama egregia, distinta per le qualità del cuore e dello spirito, e tutta di se medesimo la colpa della loro amara separazione. Ora un tale linguaggio era esso dettato dalla giustizia, o dalla vanità! Non ricorda esso quel detto di Giulio, che la moglie di Cesare non doveva nè manco essere sospetta? quanta vanità in quel Cesareo detto! Se non che in fatto di vanità Lord Byron non la cedeva a nessuno. Della figliuolina sua, della cara sua Ada parlava con grande tenerezza, e pareva compiacersi del sacrificio grande che faceva lasciandola per conforto alla di lei madre. L'odio immenso, che portava alla suocera, e ad una specie di Euriclea di Lady Byron, due donne alle quali apponeva di avere influito grandemente ad allontanarla da se, dimostrava ad evidenza quanto egli ne fosse dolente: ad onta di qualche amaro scherzo contro di essa medesima, che ne' suoi scritti si rinviene, dettato piuttosto dal rancore che dalla indifferenza. L'animo suo era così irritabile e della censura intollerante, che fu udito dire di

Digitized by Google

una Dama, la quale aveva osato criticare un suo verso, che l'avrebbe voluta annegare nell' Oceano; quasi che la laguna di Venezia non gli paresse abbastanza profonda. Quando udiva che un tale o un tale altro disponevasi a tradurre i suoi versi impallidiva, e quasi tremava pel timore che non fosse traduttore adeguato. La sua mano era pronta a soccorrere il misero, ma i suoi severi compatriotti lo accusavano di non istenderla bastantemente in secreto: quasi che la mancanza di una seconda virtù distruggere potesse la prima: e poi, se tutto ciò che Lord Byron faceva era soverchiamente investigato, di chi la colpa? Tirteo novello, i rinnovati Greci col canto maggiormente eccitava alla pugna e alla vittoria. Morì fra di loro, che amava, ed ottenne da una Nazione, che conscia era solo delle sue virtù, e della propria gratitudine, immenso, puro e generoso compianto. La sua patria, onorando altamente il suo poeta, contrastò alla Grecia il possedimento della sua spoglia mortale. Ebbela: alla seconda rimase ciò, che meglio appartenevale . . . il Cuore! Grecia! . . . egli disse, e più non disse."

2. Moore's extracts from *Ritratto* xxiii. (*Life*, pp. 413-415).

"'Toi, dont le monde encore ignore le vrai nom,
Esprit mystérieux, Mortel, Ange, ou Démon,
Qui que tu sois, Byron, bon, ou fatal génie,
J'aime de tes concerts la sauvage harmonie.'
LAMARTINE.

"It would be to little purpose to dwell upon the mere beauty of a countenance in which the expression of an extraordinary mind was so conspicuous. What serenity was seated on the forehead, adorned with the finest chestnut hair, light, curling, and disposed with such art, that the art was hidden in the imitation of most pleasing nature! What varied expression in his eyes! They were of the azure colour of the heavens, from which they seemed to derive their origin. His teeth, in form, in colour, in transparency, resembled pearls; but his cheeks were too delicately tinged with the hue of the pale rose. His neck, which he was in the habit of keeping uncovered as much as the usages of society permitted, seemed to have been formed in a mould, and was very white. His hands were as beautiful as if they had been the works of art. His figure left nothing to be desired, particularly by those who found rather a grace than a defect in a certain light and gentle undulation of the person when he entered a room, and of which you hardly felt tempted to enquire the cause. Indeed it was scarcely perceptible,—the clothes he wore were so long.

"He was never seen to walk through the streets of Venice, nor along the pleasant banks of the Brenta, where he spent some weeks of the summer; and there are some who assert that he has never seen, excepting from a window, the wonders of the 'Piazza di San Marco;'—so powerful in him was the desire of not showing himself to be deformed in any part of his person. I, however, believe that

Digitized by Google

he has often gazed on those wonders, but in the late and solitary hour, when the stupendous edifices which surrounded him, illuminated by the soft and placid light of the moon, appeared a thousand times more lovely.

"His face appeared tranquil like the ocean on a fine spring morning; but, like it, in an instant became changed into the tempestuous and terrible, if a passion, (a passion did I say?) a thought, a word, occurred to disturb his mind. His eyes then lost all their sweetness, and sparkled so that it became difficult to look on them. So rapid a change would not have been thought possible; but it was impossible to avoid acknowledging that the natural state of his mind was the tempestuous.

"What delighted him greatly one day annoyed him the next; and whenever he appeared constant in the practice of any habits, it arose merely from the indifference, not to say contempt, in which he held them all: whatever they might be, they were not worthy that he should occupy his thoughts with them. His heart was highly sensitive, and suffered itself to be governed in an extraordinary degree by sympathy; but his imagination carried him away, and spoiled every thing. He believed in presages, and delighted in the recollection that he held this belief in common with Napoleon. It appeared that, in proportion as his intellectual education was cultivated, his moral education was neglected, and that he never suffered himself to know or observe other restraints than those imposed by his inclinations. Nevertheless, who could believe that he had a constant, and almost infantine timidity, of which the evidences were so apparent as to render its existence indisputable, notwithstanding the difficulty experienced in associating with Lord Byron a sentiment which had the appearance of modesty? Conscious as he was that, wherever he presented himself, all eyes were fixed on him, and all lips, particularly those of the women, were opened to say, 'There he is; that is Lord Byron,'—he necessarily found himself in the situation of an actor obliged to sustain a character, and to render an account, not to others (for about them he gave himself no concern), but to himself, of his every action and word. This occasioned him a feeling of uneasiness which was obvious to every one.

"He remarked on a certain subject (which in 1814 was the topic of universal discourse) that 'the world was worth neither the trouble taken in its conquest, nor the regret felt at its loss,' which saying (if the worth of an expression could ever equal that of many and great actions) would almost show the thoughts and feelings of Lord Byron to be more stupendous and unmeasured than those of him respecting whom he spoke.

"His gymnastic exercises were sometimes violent, and at others almost nothing. His body, like his spirit, readily accommodated itself to all his inclinations. During an entire winter, he went out every morning alone to row himself to the island of Armenians, (a small island situated in the midst of the tranquil lagune, and distant from Venice about a half a league,) to enjoy the society of those learned and hospitable monks, and to learn their difficult language; and, in the evening, entering again into his gondola,

Digitized by Google

he went, but only for a couple of hours, into company. A second winter, whenever the water of the lagune was violently agitated, he was observed to cross it, and, landing on the nearest *terra firma*, to fatigue at least two horses with riding.

"No one ever heard him utter a word of French, although he was perfectly conversant with that language. He hated the nation and its modern literature; in like manner, he held the modern Italian literature in contempt, and said it possessed but one living author,—a restriction which I know not whether to term ridiculous, or false and injurious. His voice was sufficiently sweet and flexible. He spoke with much suavity, if not contradicted, but rather addressed himself to his neighbour than to the entire company.

"Very little food sufficed him; and he preferred fish to flesh for this extraordinary reason, that the latter, he said, rendered him ferocious. He disliked seeing women eat; and the cause of this extraordinary antipathy must be sought in the dread he always had, that the notion he loved to cherish of their perfection and almost divine nature might be disturbed. Having always been governed by them, it would seem that his very self-love was pleased to take refuge in the idea of their excellence,—a sentiment which he knew how (God knows how) to reconcile with the contempt in which, shortly afterwards, almost with the appearance of satisfaction, he seemed to hold them. But contradictions ought not to surprise us in characters like Lord Byron's; and then, who does not know that the slave holds in detestation his ruler?

"Lord Byron disliked his countrymen, but only because he knew that his morals were held in contempt by them. The English, themselves rigid observers of family duties, could not pardon him the neglect of his, nor his trampling on principles; therefore neither did he like being presented to them, nor did they, especially when they had their wives with them, like to cultivate his acquaintance. Still there was a strong desire in all of them to see him, and the women in particular, who did not dare to look at him but by stealth, said, in an under voice, 'What a pity it is!' If, however, any of his compatriots of exalted rank and of high reputation came forward to treat him with courtesy, he showed himself obviously flattered by it, and was greatly pleased with such association. It seemed that to the wound which remained always open in his ulcerated heart such soothing attentions were as drops of healing balm, which comforted him.

"Speaking of his marriage,—a delicate subject, but one still agreeable to him, if it was treated in a friendly voice,—he was greatly moved, and said it had been the innocent cause of all his errors and all his griefs. Of his wife he spoke with much respect and affection. He said she was an illustrious lady, distinguished for the qualities of her heart and understanding, and that all the fault of their cruel separation lay with himself. Now, was such language dictated by justice or by vanity? Does it not bring to mind the saying of Julius, that the wife of Cæsar must not even be suspected? What vanity in that saying of Cæsar! In fact, if it had not been from vanity, Lord Byron would have admitted this

Digitized by Google

to no one. Of his young daughter, his dear Ada, he spoke with great tenderness, and seemed to be pleased at the great sacrifice he had made in leaving her to comfort her mother. The intense hatred he bore his mother-in-law, and a sort of Euryclea of Lady Byron, two women to whose influence he, in a great measure, attributed her estrangement from him,—demonstrated clearly how painful the separation was to him, notwithstanding some bitter pleasantries which occasionally occur in his writings against her also, dictated rather by rancour than by indifference."

Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX III.

## WEDDERBURN WEBSTER'S REPLY TO THE *QUARTERLY REVIEW*.

(See p. 53, *note* 2.)

THE following letter appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* for December 19, 1816, and is an answer to the article in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1816, which reviewed *Waterloo and other Poems*, by J. Wedderburn Webster. Paris, 1816:—

"To MR. W. GIFFORD,

"Editor of the *Quarterly Review*.

---

"'Tristius haud illis monstrum, nec sævior ulla
Pestis et ira Deûm Stygiis sese extulit undis.
Virginei volucrum vultus; fœdissima ventris
Proluvies; uncæque manus; et pallida semper
Ora fame.'

VIRGIL.

"SIR,—This address will the less surprize you, having so lately received one of a similar nature from Dr. Clarke, in which with so much reason he complains of your 'obliquity of fair criticism,' in the Review of his Travels, and I am fortunate in the warranty of that precedent to repel your invidious attack upon myself in the last number of the *Quarterly Review*.

"That those high talents which deservedly placed the *Baviad* in the first School of Criticism, should be lent to the construction of such matter as that which now too frequently deforms the pages of your Review, must excite the indignation of your friends, and cannot fail to ensure the contempt of your enemies.

"In support of this position, with a moderation to which you are a stranger, I shall add for the present but one instance to that of Dr. Clarke's and my own, wherein you display a wanton desertion of those principles upon which you pretend, and upon which you can alone have a right to criticise the works of others.

Digitized by Google

"For this purpose it is unnecessary to traverse the record, as the article on 'the Story of Rimini' in the 28th Number of your Review, immediately presents itself. You there commence with an absurdity and end with an insult—affecting a douce humanité, which, if you ever possessed, you have forgot the practice of—and a lofty profession of candour and impartiality, set forth it would seem for the mere purpose of making your defection of such principles, and your subsequent personal attack upon the author the more unwarrantable and conspicuous.

"Though it is impossible to follow you through all the petty distortions and false colouring, by which, with a 6th form ingenuity, you have attempted to present that Poem to the public, I shall cite the concluding passage, which is meant I presume as a kind of Elegy on the mangled remains of the Author; and with such a specimen of the *candour* and *impersonality* of your criticism, I shall leave our readers to form their own conclusions. The article in question ends thus—

"'Mr. Hunt prefixes to his work a dedication to Lord Byron, in which he assumes a high tone, and talks big of his 'fellow dignity,' and independence; what fellow dignity may mean, we know not, perhaps the dignity of a *fellow;* but this we will say, that Mr. Hunt is more unlucky in his pompous pretension to versification and good language, than he is in that which he makes, in this dedication to proper spirit, as he calls it, and fellow dignity; for we never in so few lines saw so many clear marks of the vulgar impatience of a low man, conscious and ashamed of his wretched vanity, and labouring with coarse flippancy, to scramble over the bounds of birth and education, and fidget himself into the stoutheartedness of being familiar with a Lord.'

"Of this Gentleman's *birth* I know as little as I do of Mr. W. Gifford's—therefore it is impossible to guess which in a *civic procession* or in the order of *parochial duties*, would be found most *worthy* of this 'fellow dignity.'—But I know the merits of '*Rimini*' are stamped with the admiration of an author whose muse has long soared far above the sooty talons of such criticism—and consequently can lose nothing, but what the contagion of such an association may for a moment leave behind it.

"In regard to *myself*, you have attempted to wound me where (I confess) *indifference* has made me invulnerable. In the desolating activity with which you *wished* to strike a *mortal blow*, you have over-shot your victim—leaving him untouched by the impotence of the assault.

"However, 'a fly may sting, tho' it cannot bite,'—and were it possible for me to think more humbly than I do of my 'Waterloo and other Poems,' you might have triumphed in proportion.

"For the motives which induced me to commit an unrevised and hasty composition to all the consequent blunders, in which, particularly during my absence from Paris, I had every right to expect the French press might send it forth,—I beg to refer you to my advertisement, though even under the *mechanical distortion* of M. Didot's Devils, had the work been published the property

Digitized by Google

of certain *retailers* in this country, I *might* have been complimented at the expense of my understanding. This is no *enigma*, at least to a Reviewer.—As it is, however, I am satisfied to bear the penalty of this incident, though I religiously believe M. Didot's *knowledge* of the English language, so fully displayed at my expence in the composition alluded to, not a whit inferior to that of Mr. Gifford's in the *French*.

"When I first heard that my publication was announced in the 30th Number of your Review (and which only reached me last week), I expected to find a *Review of the work*, not a *personal attack* upon myself. That you have given everything but the former, and identified the latter by the most repulsive features, will be readily admitted by any unbiassed reader of both.

"The whole article, whether taken as the one or the other, is such a complete 'Jokeby' *composition* that one cannot seriously attribute it to the Author of the *Baviad*, though it becomes yours by adoption. It appears rather the slimy offspring of some Grub-street worm, who, centipede-like, crawls and stings—and who, in the stifled madness of low pique and impotent revenge has burst—into a rhapsody of satire without wit—ribaldry without truth—and abuse without even the garnish of common sense to make it intelligible. To the order of 'fellow dignity' with which you seem so conversant, it may, however, possess all those qualities, but beyond that respectable fraternity, as I am persuaded it can create no feeling but disgust—and leave none but oblivion, I can only say with Swift—that

> "'On me when dunces are satirick,
> I take it for a panegyric.'

Passing therefore over the exordium, and all its component ropery and low parodies upon my name, too contemptible even to excite indignation, I shall give your remark upon the 14th stanza of 'Waterloo,' as a curious specimen of your *playful imagination* and *acute criticism*—that Stanza runs thus, page 10—

> "'Bear witness Soigniers's darkling bowers,
> And Hougoumont! thy shatter'd towers
> Though each by war—not tempest rent—
> Thou yet can boast one battlement!
> That long shall speak to other times,
> And mock the power of Deepest crimes;
> For well thy rude unhallowed fane,
> Hath marked the downfal of the rebel train!'

Upon which you make the following ingenious commentary:—

"'The whole stanza is a curious piece of *verbal* mosaic, but the most wonderful of all is that line in which a wood and a house are jointly apostrophised with a singular pronoun and a plural verb—on the subject of a *talkative battlement common to both!!!*'

"'What *verbal mosaic* may mean, any more than *oral*, *auricular*, or *ocular* mosaic, it is difficult to determine—perhaps the *law of Moses*, and that we are indebted to some *pious vision*

Digitized by Google

under 'the pains of sleep' for all your valuable apothegms; indeed, when you tell us of '*talkative battlements*' growing in forests, it is pretty clear the whole must have been the effect of an anodyne, which ending in the night-mare, produced that sanguinary image of the foot soldier you bring in so happily, for you proceed—'Having apparently *collected* from the conduct of our countrymen who *literally swarm* (more mosaic) round every penny shew-box in Paris, that John Bull is somewhat muddy headed, he (query, M. Didot or Mr. Gifford) has taken an insidious advantage of the circumstance to *propound* a riddle to him, which would have puzzled Sphinx herself—

"'—The Vulture shrieked aloud,
And the red Traveller sought his shroud.'—P. 9.

Now *riddle my ree*, what is this?

"'After a hundred conjectures we ended with *determining* (ingenious enough in Mr. Gifford), that it was one of the *Foot Guards* going on the forlorn hope—No such thing—it is the rising sun! The peculiar malice of the question lies in this, that whereas the red Traveller of Ossian, from whom the *word* is taken, is broad and bright and glowing, the red Traveller (for *Traveller* read *Reviewer*) of the Poem is first black, and then of no colour at all, for he never makes his appearance.' This is below all comment; but I shall subjoin the stanza and note upon which it is formed, in testimony of your *impartial judgment* and *apt critique*.

"'Stanza 12.—P. 9.

"''Twas then the vulture shrieked aloud,
And the red Traveller sought his shroud;[1]
Ah! little were his hottest ray,
To those which fired the earth that day.
The eye of heaven, refused to look
On that—which man's alone could brook—
For then did havoc wildly reign;
And Mercy shuddering fled her lost domain!'

"In looking over the volume, you seem to have been impelled by a *commendable* aversion to the evidence of any *invulnerable* parts of the Poem, making the words of Milton no fiction—

"'—Aside the Devil turned
For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
Eyed them askance.'

Accordingly you next select the following verse, p. 21.

"'It was an hour when none could save
Or tear one victim from the grave;

---

1. "And the red Traveller sought his shroud."

"My fame is bright before me, like the streak of light on a cloud, when the broad sun comes forth red Traveller of the sky."—OSSIAN.

Digitized by Google

All in a common ruin lay,
In ghastly token of the fray.
There both the dying and the dead,
Own'd each alike one swampy bed;
And there, the spirits of the slain
Might seek to find their earthly forms in vain.'

"Now your Review upon this—'The Poem goes on to say the Battle was so tremendous that when the ghosts of the dead men *came* back in the night (still the night mare) to look for their bodies they were not able to find them, as

"'—Then the spirits of the slain
Might seek to find their earthly forms in vain.'

"Upon this part I can't do better than parodize your own passage:—

"'And this is the trash that Mr. Gifford has the perfidy to palm on the British Public as the Critique of a Reviewer on an English Poem!!' One more instance, but by far the most atrocious of your perversion and illiberal distortion of my work, and I have done—It is this—and my comment upon it will be very brief—what you have made a *Translation* is given by me as an IMITATION of Gresset, and as such I believe is invulnerable to your missiles—you *knew* this, but in your spirit of malignity you chose to render my passages ridiculous by making them your own—and by a chaotic play upon words, by which the best Poem (allowing mine to be the worst) may be made appear any thing but what it is in the eyes of those, who judge by *such criticisms*. As the present Attorney General once said, 'Libels are no very dreadful things, if a man will but take care of his own *honour* it signifies nothing though he be libelled from the beginning of January to the end of December;'—and in this I perfectly concur—but there is a certain form of attack, a certain kind of negative, midnight insult, which no man can tacitly submit to, without becoming contemptible to others by his own compromise—there are cases, and I consider the present as one in point, where moderation ceases to be a virtue, and when the feelings direct their own issue—when we survive them—life is held on far too dear terms. If however in presenting these remarks to the public, for which I owe many apologies, any expressions have escaped me at all bordering on the same character and of the same complexion as your attack upon me in the *Quarterly Review*, I am ready to admit them *unworthy of myself*—but I cannot allow they are improperly applied. I shall conclude with a text from the *Baviad*. The *commentary* we have yet to find:—

"'*It is to be wished that Critics by profession, sensible of the influence which their opinions necessarily have on the public taste, would divest themselves* of their prejudices when they sit down—to the execution *of what I hope they consider a* SOLEMN DUTY.'

"Of such professions we may say with Martial—

"'Nos hæc novimus esse nihil.'

"J. WEDDERBURN WEBSTER.

"Gladwood near Melrose, December 10, 1816."



Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX IV.

## STENDHAL'S ACCOUNT OF BYRON AT VENICE.

(See p. 140, *note* 1.)

IN *Rome, Naples, et Florence*, par de Stendhal (Henri Beyle), *Edition complète* (1854), p. 394, appears, under the date of June 27, 1817, the following entry: "L'on m'a présenté "au spectacle à Lord Byron." A passage at this point seems to have been omitted which was thus translated in *Rome, Naples, and Florence*, by Count de Stendhal (London, 1818, 8vo), pp. 254, 255 :—

"*June 27th.*—I was introduced, at the theatre, to Lord Byron. —What a grand countenance!—it is impossible to have finer eyes!—the divine man of genius!—He is yet scarcely twenty-eight years of age, and he is the first poet in England, probably in the world; when he is listening to music it is a countenance worthy of the *beau-idéal* of the Greeks.

"For the rest, let a man be ever so great a poet, let him besides be the head of one of the most ancient families in England, this is too much for our age, and I have learnt with pleasure, that *Lord Byron is a wretch.* When he came into the drawing-room of Madame de Staël, at Copet, all the English ladies left it. Our unfortunate man of genius had the imprudence to marry—his wife is very clever, and has renewed at his expense the old story of *Tom Jones and Blifil.* Men of genius are generally mad, or at the least very imprudent! his lordship was so atrocious, as to take an actress into keeping for two months. If he had been a blockhead, nobody would have concerned themselves with his following the example of almost all young men of fashion; but it is well known that Mr. Murray, the bookseller, gives him two guineas a line for all the verses he sends him. He is absolutely the counterpart of M. de Mirabeau; the feodalists, before the Revolution, not knowing how to answer the *Eagle of Marseilles*, discovered that he was a monster. The Provençal would laugh at what befel his countryman; the Englishman, it appears, thought proper to take up the matter in the high tragic tone. The injustice which this young Lord has met

Digitized by Google

with in his own country, has rendered him, it is said, gloomy and misanthropic. Much good may it do him! If at the age of 28, when he can already reproach himself with having written six volumes of the finest poetry, it had been possible thoroughly to know the world, he would have been aware that in the 19th century there is but one alternative, to be a *blockhead* or a *monster*. Be this as it may, he is the most delightful monster I ever knew; in talking of poetry in any literary discussion he is as simple as a child; the reverse is the case with an academician. He can speak the ancient Greek, the modern Greek, and the Arabic. He is learning the Armenian language here of an Armenian Papa, who is occupied in composing a very curious work to ascertain the precise situation of the Garden of Eden. This work, Lord Byron, whose sombre genius adores the oriental fictions, will translate into English. Were I in his place, I would pass myself off as dead, and commence a new life, as Mr. Smith, a worthy merchant of Lima."

Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX V.

## BYRON'S UNFINISHED SKIT ON SOTHEBY'S TOUR (1816–17) WITH HIS FAMILY, PROFESSOR ELMSLEY, AND DR. PLAYFAIR.

(See p. 191, *note* 1.)

"Ravenna, August 19th 1820.

"ITALY, OR *NOT* CORINNA: A TRAVELLING ROMANCE BY AN *ÉCRIVAIN EN POSTE*.

"In the year 181—, not very long after the peace of Lord Castlereagh's, which only resembled that of the Deity, in its passing 'all understanding,' among the 100,000 travellers who broke loose from Great Britain in all directions, there were two whose movements we mean to follow, and some others who will be found to follow those movements.

"They were young men between twenty and thirty years of age: their names were Amandeville and Clutterbuck, which are still recorded in the various Inn-books of their route, with considerable variations of orthography, according to the accomplishments of the waiter who took them down for the police; they are also carved on some of the window frames, and written in the Album of Arqua immediately under those of Mr. Solemnboy, the poet, Mrs. Solemnboy, and the six Miss Solemnboys, who much about the same period began to travel—the young ladies for improvement, the old lady for company, and Mr. Solemnboy himself, at the age of Sixty, for the acquisition of languages, being addicted to translation.

"The two single Gentlemen above mentioned posted in their light barouche, with no great luggage, and a patience, acquired on the great English North road, of nine miles an hour, which, however, became more worthy of comparison with that of Job, by the probationary exercise of several days journey on German roads with German postillions, in their way to a more genial climate.

"Mr. Solemnboy and family had more soberly contracted with a Vetturino, for the sum of 12 louis, to convey them to Paris, finding them in food and the French language on the way, in consequence of which agreement they had ample leisure afforded for the digestion of the one and the acquisition of the other.

Digitized by Google

"On their arrival at the grand metropolis of the civilized World, which at this period was civilizing the Bashkins, who had travelled all the way from the Chinese wall to see it, they wondered and were delighted; and Mr. Solemnboy published an Ode to the uppermost Emperor of the day, which Mr. Galignani, who appropriates most English works by republication, has not yet pirated, though it has now been several years printed.

"After a short stay in Paris, they accompanied their Vetturino to Switzerland and Italy, in the same ratio as before and in the same vehicle, which, though large, was neither speedy nor convenient. It admitted the rain, but excluded the light, and was only airy during a high wind, or a snow storm. However, by dint of being obliged to get out on going up a hill, and of being thrown out on going down one, they contrived to see so much of the Country as to acquire a tolerable notion of landscape; and their letters dated G—— were full of past and present description, with very little assistance from Coxe's Guide-book."

Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX VI.

## EXTRACTS FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE POLICE.

(See page 294, and *note* on Countess Guiccioli.)

I. THESE reports and letters, extracted and translated from the Archives of the Police at Bologna, show the interest with which the various Governments in Italy followed the movements of Byron.

1. Report from the Director of Police at Bologna to the Director-General of Police at Rome.

"1819, 21st August (No. 12).

"Milan, at the present time, is the centre [speaking of the *Società Romantica*] and principal seat of this Society, to which have been already admitted various gentlemen of that capital. The celebrated Pellegrino Rossi, perhaps well known to Your Excellency, is a prominent member.

"This Rossi is in correspondence with the well-known Lord Byron, who, according to information which you have already received from me from Florence, is endeavouring to establish a similar society at Bologna. What he has done is, to hire a suite of rooms for a year in the Merendoni Palace, which are being furnished by him throughout. My Lord arrived four days ago, and went to stay at Pellegrino's Hotel, where he still is, and where he will remain, I expect, until the Casa Merendoni is ready. Many ladies already begin to visit him, the first of whom is the Marchesa Guiccioli.

"As I am advised from Florence, Lady *Morgan* is visited with the same object, and also the well-known Lord *Kinnaird*, who fired a pistol at the Duke of Wellington, obeying, I suppose, the impulse of his capricious nature.

"It is indeed remarkable that neither the Austrian nor the Tuscan Governments have ever (to their own peril) foreseen or suspected in any way the existence of such secret societies.

"I do not conceal from your Excellency that this news both

Digitized by Google

perplexes and embarrasses me. *Byron* is a man of letters, and his literary merit will attract to him the most distinguished men of learning in Bologna. This class of men has no love for the Government. Your Excellency sees, therefore, how difficult it becomes for me to exercise the necessary supervision over my Lord's private affairs. Your Excellency may be certain that I shall not remain inactive; but you will neither refuse, nor even delay, to give me your most kind advice, which will point out to me the safest and most useful course for me to adopt.

"I must take this opportunity of assuring you of the esteem and respect with which I invariably, etc., etc."

## 2. Report to the Director of the Police at Bologna.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—The Countess *Guiccioli*, and not *Vissoli*, is said to be the *innamorata* of Lord Byron. She is the wife of our Cavaliere Guiccioli of Ravenna, and lives in the Contrada Gallieri, number 567, adjoining the Palazzo Merendoni. I am assured that an old servant of this lady has been ordered by her to get certain articles of furniture, and that he has bought some from various second-hand shops, and particularly from *Agostino Montanari*, who lives at Carrobio. It seems that these purchases have been made with the knowledge of Lord Byron, and that the furniture has been moved to an apartment on the ground floor of the above-mentioned house, number 567. It would seem, moreover, that the aforesaid Lord has paid for these articles.

. . . . . .

"It appears that Lord Byron intends to go the day after to-morrow to his new house, which has already been prepared for him. So a house-porter states; also Professor Cardinali, who has certain relations with this nobleman, from whom, as I understand, Cardinali expects to receive a considerable sum in reward for the dedication made, or about to be made, to him of one of his works.

. . . . . .

"After dinner to-day, Lord Byron sent a messenger to demand a passport for a servant of his, saying that he had to send him to Venice with a very pressing letter. The official in charge of the passport department told him that it would be necessary to bring his request before your Excellency, this being laid down by the police regulations. It is to be noted that Lord Byron has not yet deposited his passport, nor demanded his permit to remain.

"I have the honour to sign myself, etc., etc.

"For the Sub-directory of Police, 22nd August, 1819, in the evening."

Digitized by Google

3. Report from the Director of Police at Bologna to the Director-General of Police at Rome (probably enclosing No. 4).

"1819, 28th August (No. 16).

"As a fitting continuation of the report which I had the honour to send to Your Excellency with regard to the well-known *Lord Byron*, I ought to tell you that, during this last week, there have been great changes in his projects.

"The day after the last post, the noble Lord sent to me to provide a passport for a certain native of Trieste, whom he wished to send at once to Venice as courier. It was 8 o'clock in the evening. We had a little interchange of messages, for I was unwilling to furnish the Triestine with a passport without the guarantee of two people of substance. He maintained that the guarantee of an English Peer like himself was enough. After various letters, which did not succeed any better than the messages, the noble Lord was at last persuaded that the courier could not start without the guarantee of two substantial men personally known to me. The proper guarantees having been given, the man set out. Two days afterwards the domicile, which had been prepared in Casa Merendoni, was changed. My Lord has gone to live in the Casa Guiccioli. Yesterday evening I discovered that he is going to leave for Venice in a few days.

"I have not failed to make use of indirect means of obtaining information concerning him; but nothing of consequence has come to my knowledge. This morning, for instance, the paper which I have the honour of enclosing to Your Excellency was given to me by a special agent of mine, employed upon business altogether different to that of Lord Byron. The document further confirms me in the opinion which I had formed from the information received from Florence about this Englishman.

"If the Guiccioli remain after the departure of my Lord, I intend to intercept their letters, and, in case of any news, I shall make a point of informing Your Excellency of everything, etc., etc."

4. Report to Signor Pietro Bravosi, Agent of Police.

"This morning, while walking with Professor Francesco Cardinali, who, as Your Excellency knows, is a friend of mine, we began to discuss the position of the *employés* of the late Government, who are still without employment. On this point he said to me: '*Keep up your courage*, for, at the most, you will have only to wait two years, since there must be a change of Government,' adding that he had heard this from persons of great weight.

"Having asked him whether such a change were credible, he answered that Lord Byron was one of those who had told him.

"Then I asked him what nation, in such conditions, ought to hold predominant power, suggesting that, if the change took place, the influence of the French nation must necessarily prevail. He replied that the influence ought to be more stable than the French

Digitized by Google

nation had been in the past, and declined to explain himself further.

"I flatter myself that in a little time I could get more information, since I am considered to be one of their party, and often go to the booksellers' shop of Masi Brothers, as I was advised by Your Excellency to frequent places where he and many others of the same opinions are in the habit of meeting.

"But I would ask you, for the present, not to make any open use of these conversations, and to treat them only as hints, for if anything of the matter became publicly known, I should be suspected, and to a certain extent compromised, and then I should no longer be of use to you as a confidential agent.

"I have the pleasure to salute you, etc., etc.

"Bologna, 26th August, 1819."

5. From the Director-General of Police at Rome to the Director of Police at Bologna.

"Rome, Direction-General of Police,
Assistant Department (No. 4484).

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—I agree in the opinion of Your Excellency that the departure of Lord Byron is a good opportunity for inspecting the correspondence of Count Guiccioli, with whom he has been on the most intimate terms.

"I am anxious to know if the servant sent as courier by Lord Byron has been for a long time with him, or if he has been recently engaged; in this second case I should be glad to know his antecedents.

"I sign myself with great esteem, etc., etc.

"4th July (*sic*), 1819."

6. From the Director of Police at Bologna to the Director-General of Police at Rome.

"1819, 8th September (No. 22).

"I shall at once obtain the required information about the Triestine sent by Lord Byron, according to your honoured command of folio No. 4484.

"This week the erratic Lord has again changed his plans. Instead of leaving for Venice, he has sent for his illegitimate infant daughter, whom he maintained there, and now he talks of going with the Guiccioli to Ravenna. This change in his domestic arrangements has been made, although, during the last week, he had moved into the Casa Guiccioli, as I had the honour to inform Your Excellency. But no sooner had the child come, than he returned to Pellegrino's Hotel, where he merely sleeps and dines. The rest of the day he spends with the Guiccioli. I continue to keep him under the strictest surveillance. At the present time, no one but Count Ranconi of Ferrara visits him, and he comes at 3 o'clock every morning (*alle 3 ogni mattina*).

"With most respectful esteem and obedience, etc., etc."

Digitized by Google

7. Report to the Director of Police at Bologna.

"Sub-Direction of Police (No. 7044).
Bologna, 10th Sept., 1819.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—Following the instructions given me to discover if the Triestine courier of Lord Byron will be in Bologna before the arrival of his master, I have been assured that this distinguished nobleman had formerly a Venetian in his service as courier, whom he dismissed some days ago, and that he then took as courier the aforesaid Triestine, who formerly served him as a groom. This man is a son of the Jew Finzi of Trieste, and they will both come to Bologna on the arrival of their master, and not before.

"I have received Your Excellency's esteemed letter, dated yesterday, No. 8951, and I have the honour to sign myself with profound respect, etc., etc."

8. Report from the Director of Police at Bologna to the Director-General of Police at Rome.

"1819, 15th September (No. 27).

"In discharge of the duty imposed upon me by your respected folio No. 4484, concerning the information with regard to the Triestine courier in the service of, and despatched by, Lord Byron, I have the honour to assure you that this person was formerly in my Lord's service as groom, and he arrived in Bologna at the same time as his master. His *padrone* is a Triestine Jew named Finzi.

"In connection with this matter, I must announce to you that, to my greatest astonishment, Lord Byron left Bologna on the 12th for Venice, in company with the Marchesa Guiccioli.

"Three days before, the Marquis, her husband, left for Ravenna. I have not failed to ask the Director of the Post to send me all letters coming from Venice addressed to Count Ranconi, who with unfailing regularity used to visit my Lord at 3 o'clock every afternoon (*alle 3 pomeridiana in ogni dì*).

"Full of profound obedience and humble, respectful esteem, etc., etc."

9. From the Director-General of Police at Rome to the Director of Police at Bologna.

"Rome, Direction-General of Police,
Assistant Department (No. 4504).

(*Most private.*)

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—In my opinion the only mode of obtaining particular knowledge respecting the associates of the new Secret Society entitled *Roma Antica*, is to secure the aid of some individual

Digitized by Google

who has the reputation of being a man of learning, and to induce him to enter this Society, taking advantage of the first vacancy that may present itself.

"Following those lines which have given Your Excellency the knowledge of the existence of this Society, you could, with your usual sagacity, discover this man of learning, and the mode of introducing him to the members of the Society, amongst whom no other type of person could so fitly carry out the suggested plan.

"I sign myself, with great esteem, etc., etc.

"15th July, 1819."

10. From the Director-General of Police at Rome to the Director of Police, Bologna.

"Rome, Direction-General of Police,
Assistant Department (No. 4530).

"No. of answer, 27.

(*Private.*)

"Subject: Measures for watching Count Ranconi in connection with Lord Byron.

"The inspection of the postal correspondence of Count Ranconi with Lord Byron will be very opportune for the purpose of discovering if they are occupied in political matters; but it will be still more advantageous to have this latter person watched in his present abode in Venice, and thus to gain information concerning his attitude towards political questions in that place.

"If the Director of Police, who is interested in carrying the matter out, approves of this proposal, I will await the result here, ready to co-operate with him in any urgency for the promotion of the well-being of both Governments. And in the mean time I sign myself, with marked esteem, etc., etc.

"25th July, 1819."

11. From the Director of Police at Bologna to the Director-General of Police at Rome.

"1819, 29th September (No. 35).

"I will do all Your Excellency prescribes in your most esteemed folio marked 4530, writing at once to the Director of Police at Venice to keep a watch upon the behaviour and surroundings of Lord Byron.

"In connection with this, I ought to inform you that, according to the tenour of the information I gave to Your Excellency in my despatch marked 12, Lady Morgan has finally come here with her husband. I have not failed to keep an eye on their movements and conduct. Up to the present I cannot say more than that both show themselves to be most determined constitutionalists and reformers. They read one evening at a meeting the address that the *Cortes of*

Digitized by Google

*Spain* made to Ferdinand VII. when, after his liberation from France, he arrived at the frontiers of his kingdom; the address is full of suggestion. Such is my duty in this emergency, and full of profound esteem, etc., etc."

12. From the Director of Police at Bologna to the General Directory of Police at Venice.

"1819, 2nd October (No. 37).

"On the 12th *ultimo* the English nobleman, Lord Byron, left this city for Venice. This person is a member of the *Secret Society* entitled *Romantica*. He is not unknown as a man of letters, and in his own country has the reputation of being a fine poet. Liberal opinions so entirely govern his mind that he passes, both in England and in many Italian cities where he is known, as one of the enthusiastic supporters of the reform party of *Manchester* and *Salford*. His large fortune gives him exceptional opportunities of carrying out his inclinations.

"All the above circumstances were sufficient to determine this Directory of Police to keep a careful eye on this gentleman, who is especially dangerous because his abilities and abundant wealth enable him to assemble at his house persons of the most cultured class.

"Therefore, my Government, having noted the actual residence of Lord Byron in your city, and his probable return to Bologna within the next few months, requires me to make a private application to Your Excellency, asking you to take steps to have him constantly watched during his stay, and to favour me with information until he removes from Venice.

"In the assurance of obtaining this favour from Your Excellency, I hold myself ready to do the same in return for you in any other similar circumstance in the future.

"I take this opportunity, etc., etc."

13. From the Director-General of Police at Rome to the Director of Police, Bologna.

"Rome, Direction-General of Police,
Assistant Department (No. 4530).

"Number of answer, 35.

"*In re* espionage over Lady Morgan and her husband.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—The nature of the political views, which Your Excellency agrees with me have been expressed by the Morgans (husband and wife), who have recently arrived in this city, demands the most rigorous and careful supervision over them personally. I doubt not that Your Excellency will have already directed that this should be done, and therefore I await the expected results.

"I sign myself, with marked esteem, etc., etc.

"6th October, 1819."

Digitized by Google

II. The following passages, translated from *Misteri di Polizia; Storia Italiana . . . ricavata dalle carte d'un Archivio Segreto di Stato*, Emilio del Cerro (Firenze, 1890), pp. 134–139, further illustrate the efficiency of the police supervision to which Byron was subjected:—

"The secret archives of the presidency of the 'Buon Governo' contain documents concerning Byron.

"The first is a letter, dated September 4, 1819, with which the minister Corsini enclosed to the President of the Buon Governo a copy of a private note from Cardinal Consalvi, Secretary of State to Pius VII. The letter runs as follows:—

"'This Imperial and Royal Government herewith transmits to your Excellency the enclosed report, sent to this department by the Austrian Legation in Rome.

"'Although the Government itself is convinced that the chief points mentioned in the report are fortunately not applicable to Tuscany, it will nevertheless be obliged if your Excellency will undertake to exercise the most unremitting and careful vigilance,' etc., etc.

"Then follows the note of Cardinal Consalvi, dated 1st September.

"'The Governor of Rome, in his capacity of Director-General of Police, has sent the following:—

"'"A private report, made by a person of authority, which has reached him from Bologna, informs him that notice has been sent from Florence to the person indicated, of the formation of a new secret Society, in which even women take part, under the name of the *Società Romantica;* that this Society is formed for the purpose of educating its members in the belief that man is subject to no religious or moral principle, but ought only to obey his natural instincts; that the centre and principal seat of this Society is in Milan; that in this Society are enrolled many gentlemen of that capital, and among them the celebrated advocate, Pellegrino Rossi; that Rossi corresponds with the well-known Lord Byron, and that, in order to found a branch of this Society at Bologna, Rossi wished to induce Lord Byron to visit Bologna; that Lord Byron has, in fact, come to Bologna, where he has rented the Palazzo Merendani (?) for a year, and meanwhile is lodging at the Hotel Pellegrino until, as is understood, the decoration and furnishing of the Casa Merendani has been completed; that numbers of ladies begin to visit Lord Byron, and amongst others the Marchesa Guiccioli; that, as he hears from Florence, Lady Morgan is expected in Bologna for the same object, and also Lord Kinnaird, who shot at the Duke of Wellington; and that, finally, neither the Austrian Government nor that of Tuscany have ever been informed of the existence of such a Society."'

* * * * * *

"The following document is dated Forli, 10th September, 1819:—

Digitized by Google

"'The Romantici have been talked about for some time, and it is well known that Byron and Kinnaird belong to the Society, for the former has written, and continues to write, poetry of this new school, and has composed certain rules, entitled, "Statutes of the Joyous Company." The latter left behind him, some time ago at Faenza, a manuscript, and it would be possible to discover its contents from Gennati, but I have never asked him, not being on intimate terms with him. Byron is staying in the country with a lady, the young wife of that Guiccioli[1] who is now in Bologna, but he does not make his permanent abode with any one. I must tell you that some time ago the Cardinal of Ravenna gave a most brilliant conversazione in honour of the noble Lord, at which, however, the Cardinal himself did not appear, lest he should act, said he, as a decoy to the assembled ladies. . . .'

"The spy who sent the foregoing report sent also the following, dated 19th September:—

"'Notices concerning Lord Byron. This gentleman is at present in Bologna, in company with the wife of Count Guiccioli. He has with him a young secretary very expert in different languages, who corresponds in English, French, Italian, and German with equal facility. He never leaves the house, but is always writing. By most careful supervision it has been discovered that his time is chiefly occupied in writing in various cyphers. But it is not known in what way these writings are despatched, for they are certainly not sent to the post. There is reason to believe that English travellers, many of whom have introductions to my Lord, are charged with these despatches. Very few letters pass through the post, and these contain only matters of private interest.

"'From Forli I hear that the said Lord is anxious to form a Society among persons of position in each city. At Bologna he has the Ercolani; at Ferrara, the Graziadei; at Faenza, the Gennati; at Forli, the Orselli; at Cesena, Roverella. Such names as these certainly do not suggest that the character of the Society is merely literary. After much consideration and piecing together of facts, I have come to the conclusion that many works, pamphlets, and dangerous writings which are in circulation have issued from the workshop of Lord Byron. Even within the last few days the enclosed has appeared in a profusion of copies, each in a different and unknown handwriting—a multiplication of copies which is attributed to the dexterity of the secretary of the noble Lord. I send a copy. The character of the work, which is not unknown either to me or to you, shows its source, and confirms me in the views I have expressed.'

"The same spy, or *fiduciario*, wrote from Florence, 29th September—

"'I find an undoubted confirmation of the matter of my previous

1. "Count Guiccioli of Ravenna, the richest proprietor in the Romagna, a crafty, intriguing man, very proud and of high birth, is believed to be guilty of the assassination of Manzoni." (Note by the spy.)

Digitized by Google

report on the *Società Romantica* in letters which reached me yesterday. One of my correspondents in Bologna, charged by me to discover the branches of the said Society, sought information from one of the heads of the Italian Masonic Lodge in Milan. I transcribe literally the reply that I have obtained.

"'"I know the *Romantici*. They form a band that aims at the destruction of our literature, our politics, our country. Lord Byron is certainly its champion, and you deceive yourself if you believe that he is occupied only in wronging (*a fare le corna a Guiccioli*) Guiccioli. He is libidinous and immoral to excess; but he soon tires of the object of his worship, and offers it as a sacrifice on the altar of his contemptuous pride. But, at the same time, in politics he is not so inconstant. Here he is an Englishman in the fullest meaning of the term. He is like a madman in his desire to ruin everything that does not belong to him, to paralyze every tendency that our Societies display towards national independence, (*sic!*), to involve us in ruin and bloodshed (*sic! sic!*),[1] in order that at last the deserted and still-smouldering States may be divided amongst his greedy and demoralized conspirators." ('Oh, what absurdities!')

"'My correspondent, in sending me this scrap of a letter, reminds me of two verses inserted by Michele Leoni of Parma, in his translation from the English of Lord Byron's work on Italy. The lines run thus—

"'And with you the teaching that is hidden
Under the veil of the new songs.'[2]

"'He specially invites me to read and reflect upon Canto IV. of this work, entitled *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.'

"We have the following information from the same agent:—

"'Bologna, 4th October, 1819. The constant watch kept by the police upon Lord Byron has led to two discoveries. The first is that his Lordship wears at his watch-chain a triangular (or rather pyramidal) seal, on the faces of which are engraved three small stars; on the seal are cut the letters F. S. Y. This is the new sign which was adopted some months ago by the Guelph Society when they gave up the use of a ring with four faces. There can be no doubt that Lord Byron has by means of intrigues obtained admission into Societies whose objects seem foreign to his own purposes.'

"'The other is derived from a letter in the handwriting of his secretary, which has been stopped at the post. It is directed to Alexis Gartner, at Milan. It appears from this letter that news has reached Bologna of the approaching establishment of the Jesuits in that city, and the secretary sends Gartner, in order to satisfy his

---

1. The remarks in brackets are inserted by the editor of *Misteri di Polizia*.

2. "E con voi la dottrina che s'asconde
Sotto il velame dei novelli carme."

Digitized by Google

friend's curiosity, a copy of an extract from a curious and very rare work of Captain George Smith, on *Jesuitical Masonry*.'

"'From Bologna, 11th October. Lord Byron left unexpectedly with Madame Guiccioli, who is therefore said either to have been carried off by him, or sold to him (*sic!*), by her husband. But it has since been discovered that she has gone by herself to Venice, while Lord Byron has set out for Northern Italy. . . .'

"'Forli, 25th October. It is understood that Lord Byron is at present at the Borromean Islands, in a pleasant rural retreat, enjoying the country house of his august friend, the Princess of Wales.'

"'Leghorn, 8th December. During my journey from Florence to Pisa, being in the company of an English traveller, I tried to obtain information from him as to the views of Lord Byron and of his fellow-workers, who are not few in number in Italy. He told me that Lord Byron made a regular practice of changing his residence immediately after he had finished any work, so that the Italian Governments might not suspect his intention of publishing any new production. During his stay at the Borromean Islands, for instance, he circulated a number of copies of one of his detestable works, entitled *Don Juan*—a work which attacks religion, morals, and the Governments—and, as soon as he had distributed these copies, he retired to Venice. The Englishman who spoke to me was familiar with all the details of the Italian institutions of the *Carbonari* and of the Guelphs, and his thorough acquaintance with these bodies made me reflect that these foreign travellers seem to be very busy with the affairs of Italy.'"

Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX VII.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF "MY GRANDMOTHER'S REVIEW."

THE circumstances which called forth the following letter to William Roberts, editor of the *British Review*, are stated in *note* 1, p. 346. The letter was published for the first time in the *Liberal*, No. I. Byron seems to have believed that Roberts was a clergyman, and a previous editor has corrected the error throughout. The letter is now printed as written:—

"To the Editor of the British Review.

"MY DEAR ROBERTS,—As a believer in the Church of England —to say nothing of the State—I have been an occasional reader and great admirer of, though not a subscriber to, your *Review*, which is rather expensive. But I do not know that any part of its contents ever gave me much surprise till the eleventh article of your twenty-seventh number made its appearance. You have there most manfully refuted a calumnious accusation of bribery and corruption, the credence of which in the public mind might not only have damaged your reputation as a Clergyman and an editor, but, what would have been still worse, have injured the circulation of your journal; which, I regret to hear, is not so extensive as the 'purity (as you well observe) of its,' etc., etc., and the present taste for propriety, would induce us to expect. The charge itself is of a solemn nature, and, although in verse, is couched in terms of such circumstantial gravity, as to induce a belief little short of that generally accorded to the thirty-nine articles, to which you so generally subscribed on taking your degrees. It is a charge the most revolting to the heart of man, from its frequent occurrence; to the mind of a Statesman, from its occasional truth; and to the soul of an editor, from its moral impossibility. You are charged then in the last line of one octave stanza, and the whole eight lines of the next, viz. 209th and 210th of the first canto of that 'pestilent poem,' *Don Juan*, with receiving, and still more foolishly acknowledging the



Digitized by Google

receipt of, certain monies, to eulogize the unknown author, who by this account must be known to you, if to nobody else. An impeachment of this nature, so seriously made, there is but one way of refuting; and it is my firm persuasion, that whether you did or did not (and *I* believe that you did not) receive the said monies, of which I wish that he had specified the sum, you are quite right in denying all knowledge of the transaction. If charges of this nefarious description are to go forth, sanctioned by all the solemnity of circumstance, and guaranteed by the veracity of verse (as Counsellor Phillips would say), what is to become of readers hitherto implicitly confident in the not less veracious prose of our critical journals? what is to become of the reviews? And if the reviews fail, what is to become of the editors? It is common cause, and you have done well to sound the alarm. I myself, in my humble sphere, will be one of your echoes. In the words of the tragedian Liston, 'I love a row,' and you seem justly determined to make one.

"It is barely possible, certainly improbable, that the writer might have been in jest; but this only aggravates his crime. A joke, the proverb says, 'breaks no bones;' but it may break a bookseller, or it may be the cause of bones being broken. The jest is but a bad one at the best for the author, and might have been a still worse one for you, if your copious contradiction did not certify to all whom it may concern your own indignant innocence, and the immaculate purity of the *British Review*. I do not doubt your word, my dear Roberts, yet I cannot help wishing that in a case of such vital importance, it had assumed the more substantial shape of an affidavit sworn before the Lord Mayor, Atkins, who readily receives any deposition, and doubtless would have brought it in some way as evidence of the designs of the reformers to set fire to London, at the same time that he himself meditates the same good office towards the river Thames.

"I am sure, my dear fellow, that you will take these observations of mine in good part; they are written in a spirit of friendship not less pure than your own editorial integrity. I have always admired you; and not knowing any shape which friendship and admiration can assume more agreeable and useful than that of good advice, I shall continue my lucubrations, mixed with here and there a monitory hint as to what I conceive to be the line you should pursue, in case you should ever again be assailed with bribes, or accused of taking them. By the way, you don't say much about the poem, except that it is 'flagitious.' This is a pity—you should have cut it up; because, to say the truth, in not doing so, you somewhat assist any notions which the malignant might entertain on the score of the anonymous asseveration which has made you so angry.

"You say, no bookseller 'was willing to take upon himself the publication, though most of them disgrace themselves by selling it.' Now, my dear friend, though we all know that those fellows will do any thing for money, methinks the disgrace is more with the purchasers; and some such, doubtless, there are, for there can be no very extensive selling (as you will perceive by that of the *British*

Digitized by Google

*Review*) without buying. You then add, 'what can the critic say?' I am sure I don't know; at present he says very little, and that not much to the purpose. Then comes, 'for praise, as far as regards the *poetry*, *many* passages might be exhibited; for condemnation, as far as regards the morality, all.' Now, my dear good Roberts, I feel for you and for your reputation; my heart bleeds for both; and I do ask you, whether or not such language does not come positively under the description of 'the puff collusive,' for which see Sheridan's farce of *The Critic* (by the way, a little more facetious than your own farce under the same title) towards the close of scene second, act the first.

"The poem is, it seems, sold as the work of Lord Byron; but you feel yourself 'at liberty to suppose it not Lord B.'s composition.' Why did you ever suppose that it was? I approve of your indignation—I applaud it—I feel as angry as you can; but perhaps your virtuous wrath carries you a little too far, when you say that 'no misdemeanour, not even that of sending into the world obscene and blasphemous poetry, the product of studious lewdness and laboured impiety, appears to you in so detestable a light as the acceptance of a present by the editor of a review, as the condition of praising an author.' The devil it don't! Think a little. This is being critical overmuch. In point of Gentile benevolence or Christian charity, it were surely less criminal to praise for a bribe, than to abuse a fellow-creature for nothing; and as to the assertion of the comparative innocence of blasphemy and obscenity, confronted with an editor's 'acceptance of a present,' I shall merely observe, that as an editor you say very well, but as a Christian divine, I would not recommend you to transpose this sentence into a sermon.

"And yet you say, 'the miserable man (for miserable he is, as having a soul of which he cannot get rid)'—But here I must pause again, and inquire what is the meaning of this parenthesis. We have heard of people of 'little soul,' or of 'no soul at all,' but never till now of 'the misery of having a soul of which we cannot get rid;' a misery under which you are possibly no great sufferer, having got rid apparently of some of the intellectual part of your own when you penned this pretty piece of eloquence.

"But to continue. You call upon Lord Byron, always supposing him *not* the author, to disclaim 'with all gentlemanly haste,' etc., etc. I am told that Lord B. is in a foreign country, some thousand miles off it may be; so that it will be difficult for him to hurry to your wishes. In the mean time, perhaps you yourself have set an example of more haste than gentility; but 'the more haste the worse speed.'

"Let us now look at the charge itself, my dear Roberts, which appears to me to be in some degree not quite explicitly worded:

"'I bribed my *Grandmother's* Review, the British.'

"I recollect hearing, soon after the publication, this subject discussed at the tea-table of Mr. S. the poet, who expressed himself, I remember, a good deal surprised that you had never reviewed his epic poem of *Saul*, nor any of his six tragedies, of which, in one

Digitized by Google

instance, the bad taste of the pit, and in all the rest, the barbarous repugnance of the principal actors, prevented the performance. Mrs. and the Misses S. being in a corner of the room perusing the proof sheets of Mr. S.'s poems in Italy or on Italy, as he says, (I wish, by the by, Mrs. S. would make the tea a little stronger,) the male part of the *conversazione* were at liberty to make a few observations on the poem and passage in question, and there was a difference of opinion. Some thought the allusion was to the *British Critic;* others, that by the expression, 'my Grandmother's Review,' it was intimated that 'my grandmother' was not the reader of the review, but actually the writer; thereby insinuating, my dear Roberts, that you were an old woman; because, as people often say, 'Jeffrey's Review,' 'Gifford's Review,' in lieu of *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly;* so 'my Grandmother's Review' and Roberts's might be also synonymous. Now, whatever colour this insinuation might derive from the circumstance of your wearing a gown, as well as from your time of life, your general style, and various passages of your writings,—I will take upon myself to exculpate you from all suspicion of the kind, and assert, without calling Mrs. Roberts in testimony, that if ever you should be chosen Pope, you will pass through all the previous ceremonies with as much credit as any pontiff since the parturition of Joan. It is very unfair to judge of sex from writings, particularly from those of the *British Review.* We are all liable to be deceived; and it is an indisputable fact, that many of the best articles in your journal, which were attributed to a veteran female, were actually written by you yourself; and yet to this day there are people who could never find out the difference. But let us return to the more immediate question.

"I agree with you that it is impossible Lord Byron should be the author, not only because as a British peer, and a British poet, it would be impracticable for him to have recourse to such facetious fiction, but for some other reasons which you have omitted to state. In the first place, his lordship has no grandmother. Now the author,—and we may believe him in this—doth expressly state that the *British* is his 'Grandmother's Review;' and if, as I think I have distinctly proved, this was not a mere figurative allusion to your supposed intellectual age and sex, my dear friend, it follows, whether you be she or no, that there is such an elderly lady still extant. And I can the more readily credit this, having a sexagenary aunt of my own, who perused you constantly, till unfortunately falling asleep over the leading article of your last number, her spectacles fell off and were broken against the fender, after a faithful service of fifteen years, and she has never been able to fit her eyes since; so that I have been forced to read you aloud to her; and this is in fact the way in which I became acquainted with the subject of my present letter and thus determined to become your public correspondent.

"In the next place, Lord B.'s destiny seems in some sort like that of Hercules of old, who became the author of all unappropriated prodigies. Lord B. has been supposed the author of the *Vampire,*

Digitized by Google

of a *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, *To the Dead Sea*, of *Death upon the Pale Horse*, of odes to *Lavalette*, to *Saint Helena*, to the *Land of the Gaul*, and to a sucking child. Now he turned out to have written none of these things. Besides, you say he knows in what a spirit of, etc., you criticise—Are you sure he knows all this? that he has read you like my poor dear aunt? They tell me he is a queer sort of a man; and I would not be too sure, if I were you, either of what he has read or what he has written. I thought his style had been the serious and terrible. As to his sending you money, this is the first time that ever I heard of his paying his reviewers in *that coin;* I thought it was rather in *their own*, to judge from some of his earlier productions. Besides, though he may not be profuse in his expenditure, I should conjecture that his reviewer's bill is not so long as his tailor's.

"Shall I give you what I think a prudent opinion. I don't mean to insinuate, God forbid! but if, by any accident, there should have been such a correspondence between you and the unknown author, whoever he may be, send him back his money: I dare say he will be very glad to have it again: it can't be much, considering the value of the article and the circulation of the journal; and you are too modest to rate your praise beyond its real worth.—Don't be angry,—I know you won't,—at this appraisement of your powers of eulogy; for on the other hand, my dear fellow, depend upon it your abuse is worth, not its own weight—that 's a feather,—but *your* weight in gold. So don't spare it: if he has bargained for *that*, give it handsomely, and depend upon your doing him a friendly office.

"But I only speak in case of possibility; for, as I said before, I cannot believe in the first instance, that you would receive a bribe to praise any person whatever; and still less can I believe that your praise could ever produce such an offer. You are a good creature, my dear Roberts, and a clever fellow; else I could almost suspect that you had fallen into the very trap set for you in verse by this anonymous Wag, who will certainly be but too happy to see you saving him the trouble of making you ridiculous. The fact is, that the solemnity of your eleventh article does make you look a little more absurd than you ever yet looked, in all probability, and at the same time does no good; for if any body believed before in the octave stanzas, they will believe still, and you will find it not less difficult to prove your negative, than the learned Partridge found it to demonstrate his not being dead, to the satisfaction of the readers of almanacks.

"What the motives of this writer may have been for (as you magnificently translate his quizzing you) 'stating, with the particularity which belongs to fact, the forgery of a groundless fiction,' (do pray, my dear R. talk a little less 'in King Cambyses' vein,') I cannot pretend to say; perhaps to laugh at you, but that is no reason for your benevolently making all the world laugh also. I approve of your being angry; I tell you I am angry too; but you should not have shown it so outrageously. Your solemn '*if* somebody personating the Editor of the,' etc., etc., 'has received from

Digitized by Google

Lord B. or from any other person,' reminds me of Charley Incledon's usual exordium when people came into the tavern to hear him sing without paying their share of the reckoning—'If a maun, or *ony* maun, or *ony ither* maun,' etc., etc.; you have both the same redundant eloquence. But why should you think any body would personate you? No body would dream of such a prank who ever read your compositions, and perhaps not many who have heard your conversation. But I have been inoculated with a little of your prolixity. The fact is, my dear Roberts, that somebody has tried to make a fool of you, and what he did not succeed in doing, you have done for him and for yourself.

"With regard to the poem itself, or the author, whom I cannot find out, (can you?) I have nothing to say: my business is with you. I am sure that you will, upon second thoughts, be really obliged to me for the intention of this letter, however far short my expressions may have fallen of the sincere good will, admiration, and thorough esteem, with which I am ever, my dear Roberts,

"Most truly yours,

"WORTLEY CLUTTERBUCK.

"*Sept.* 4th, 1819.
*Little Pidlington.*

"P.S. My letter is too long to revise, and the post is going. I forget whether or not I asked you the meaning of your last words, though not dying speech and confession let us hope, 'the forgery of a groundless fiction.' Now, as all forgery is fiction, and all fiction a kind of forgery, is not this tautological? The sentence would have ended more strongly with 'forgery;' only—it hath an awful Bank of England sound, and would have ended like an indictment, besides sparing you several words, and conferring a meaning upon the remainder. But this is mere verbal criticism. Good bye—once more yours truly,

"W. C.

"P.S. 2d.[1]—Is it true that the Saints make up the losses of the review?—It is very handsome in them to be at so great an expense—Pray pardon my taking up so much of your time from the bar, and from your clients, who I hear are about the same number with the readers of your journal. *Twice* more yours,

"W. C."

---

1. The manuscript of the second postscript is missing.

Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX VIII.

## MOORE'S VISIT TO VENICE IN OCTOBER, 1819.

(See p. 369, and *note* 1.)

IN Moore's *Life of Byron*, pp. 409–423, will be found an interesting account of his visit to Byron. The following passages from Moore's Diary (*Memoirs, etc.*, vol. iii. pp. 24–29) also refer to his stay in Venice in October, 1819:—

"*October 7th.* . . . Left Padua at twelve, and arrived at Lord Byron's country house, La Mira, near Fusina, at two. He was but just up and in his bath; soon came down to me; first time we have met these five years; grown fat, which spoils the picturesqueness of his head. The Countess Guiccioli, whom he followed to Ravenna, came from thence with him to Venice by the consent, it appears, of her husband. Found him in high spirits and full of his usual frolicksome gaiety. He insisted upon my making use of his house at Venice while I stay, but could not himself leave the Guiccioli. He drest, and we set off together in my carriage for Venice; a glorious sunset when we embarked at Fusina in a gondola, and the view of Venice and the distant Alps (some of which had snow on them, reddening with the last light) was magnificent; but my companion's conversation, which, though highly ludicrous and amusing, was anything but romantic, threw my mind and imagination into a mood not at all agreeing with the scene. Arrived at his palazzo on the Grand Canal, (he having first made the gondolier row round in order to give me a sight of the Piazetta,) where he gave orders with the utmost anxiety and good nature for my accommodation, and dispatched persons in search of a laquais de place, and his friend Mr. Scott, to give me in charge to. No Opera this evening. He ordered dinner from a traiteur's, and stopped to dine with me. Had much curious conversation with him about his wife before Scott arrived. He has written his memoirs, and is continuing them; thinks of going and purchasing lands under the Patriotic Government in South America. Much talk about *Don Juan;* he is writing a third canto; the Duke of Wellington; his taking so much money; gives instances of disinterested men, Epaminondas, etc., etc., down to Pitt himself, who,

Digitized by Google

"'As minister of state, is
Renown'd for ruining Great Britain gratis.'

"At nine o'clock he set off to return to La Mira, and I went with Mr. Scott to two theatres; at the first a comedy, 'Il Prigioniero de *Newgate*,' translated from the French; at the second, a tragedy of Alfieri, 'Ottavia;' actors all disagreeable. Forgot to mention that Byron introduced me to his Countess before we left La Mira: she is a blonde and young; married only about a year, but not very pretty.

"*8th*. . . . Among the portraits of the Doges, in the library, there is a blank left for that of Faliero, who, after his eightieth year, conspired against his country, on account of an insult he received. Instead of his portrait are the words, *Locus Marini Falieri decapitati pro criminibus*. Must examine his history. Lord B. meant to write a tragedy on this subject; went to one of the churches to look for his tomb, and thought he trod upon it on entering, which affected his mind very much; but it was a tomb of one of the Valeri. B. very superstitious; won't begin anything on a Friday. . . . Lord B. came up to town at six o'clock, and he and I dined with Scott at the Pellegrino: showed us a letter which his Countess had just received from her husband, in which, without a word of allusion to the way in which she is living with B., he makes some proposal with respect to money of B.'s being invested in his hands, as a thing advantageous to both; a fine specimen of an Italian husband. Went afterwards to the theatre for a short time, and thence to the Contessa d'Albrizzi's. . . . From the Contessa d'Albrizzi we went to Madame B. who, they tell me, is one of the last of the Venetian ladies of the old school of nobility; thoroughly profligate, of course, in which she but resembles the new school. Her manners very pleasant and easy. She talked to me much about Byron; bid me scold him for the scrape he had got into; said that, till this, *Il se conduisait si bien*. Introduced me to another old countess, who, when I said how much I admired Venice, answered, *Oui, pour un étranger tout ça doit être bien drôle*.

"*9th*. . . . Dined with Lord B. at the Pellegrino. What the husband wants is for Lord B. to lend him 1000*l*. at five per cent.; that is, give it to him; though he talks of giving security, and says in any other way it would be an *avvilimento* to him! Scott joined us in the evening, and brought me a copy of the Italian translation of *Lalla Rookh*. Lord B., Scott says, getting fond of money: he keeps a box into which he occasionally puts sequins; he has now collected about 300, and his great delight, Scott tells me, is to open the box, and contemplate his store.

"*10th*. . . . Lord B., Scott, and I dined at the Pellegrino; before we went Lord B. read me what he has done of the third canto of *Don Juan*. In the evening all went to the Opera together, and from thence at twelve o'clock to a sort of public-house, to drink hot punch; forming a strange contrast to a dirty cobbler, whom we saw in a nice room delicately eating ice. Lord B. took me home in his gondola at two o'clock; a beautiful moonlight, and the reflection

Digitized by Google

of the palaces in the water, and the stillness and grandeur of the whole scene (deprived as it was of its deformities by the dimness of the light) gave a nobler idea of Venice then I had yet had.

"11*th*. . . . Left Venice at one o'clock, and got to Lord Byron's at three; a handsome dinner ready for me. Saw the Countess again, who looked prettier than she did the first time. Guiccioli is her name, *nata Gamba*. Lord B. came on with me to Stra, where we parted. He has given me his Memoirs to make what use I please of them. Arrived at Padua at seven."

Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX IX.

## REPLY TO BLACKWOOD'S *EDINBURGH MAGAZINE*.

(See p. 385, *note* 1.)

### SOME OBSERVATIONS UPON AN ARTICLE IN *BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE*.

No. XXIX., AUGUST, 1819.

"Why, how now, Hecate? you look angrily."
*Macbeth.*

"TO J. D. ISRAELI, ESQ.,

THE AMIABLE AND INGENIOUS AUTHOR OF *THE CALAMITIES* AND *QUARRELS OF AUTHORS*; THIS ADDITIONAL QUARREL AND CALAMITY IS INSCRIBED BY ONE OF THE NUMBER.

"Ravenna, March 15, 1820.

"'THE life of a writer' has been said, by Pope, I believe, to be '*a warfare upon earth*.' As far as my own experience has gone, I have nothing to say against the proposition; and, like the rest, having once plunged into this state of hostility, must, however reluctantly, carry it on. An article has appeared in a periodical work, entitled 'Remarks on *Don Juan*,' which has been so full of this spirit, on the part of the writer, as to require some observations on mine.

"In the first place, I am not aware by what right the writer assumes this work, which is anonymous, to be my production. He will answer, that there is internal evidence; that is to say, that there are passages which appear to be written in my name, or in my manner. But might not this have been done on purpose by another? He will say, why not then deny it? To this I could answer, that of all the things attributed to me within the last five years,—Pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Deaths upon Pale Horses, Odes to the Land of the Gaul, Adieus to England, Songs to Madame La Valette, Odes to St. Helena, Vampires, and what not,—of which, God knows, I never

Digitized by Google

composed nor read a syllable beyond their titles in advertisements,—I never thought it worth while to disavow any, except *one* which came linked with an account of my 'residence in the isle of Mitylene,' where I never resided, and appeared to be carrying the amusement of those persons, who think my name can be of any use to them, a little too far.

"I should hardly, therefore, if I did not take the trouble to disavow these things published in my name, and yet not mine, go out of my way to deny an anonymous work; which might appear an act of supererogation. With regard to *Don Juan*, I neither deny nor admit it to be mine—every body may form their own opinion; but, if there be any who now, or in the progress of that poem, if it is to be continued, feel, or should feel themselves so aggrieved as to require a more explicit answer, privately and personally, they shall have it.

"I have never shrunk from the responsibility of what I have written, and have more than once incurred obloquy by neglecting to disavow what was attributed to my pen without foundation.

"The greater part, however, of the 'Remarks on *Don Juan*' contain but little on the work itself, which receives an extraordinary portion of praise as a composition. With the exception of some quotations, and a few incidental remarks, the rest of the article is neither more nor less than a personal attack upon the imputed author. It is not the first in the same publication: for I recollect to have read, some time ago, similar remarks upon *Beppo* (said to have been written by a celebrated northern preacher); in which the conclusion drawn was, that 'Childe Harold, Byron, and the Count in *Beppo*, were one and the same person;' thereby making me turn out to be, as Mrs. Malaprop says, '*like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once.*' That article was signed 'Presbyter Anglicanus;' which, I presume, being interpreted, means Scotch Presbyterian. I must here observe, and it is at once ludicrous and vexatious to be compelled so frequently to repeat the same thing,—that my case, as an author, is peculiarly hard, in being everlastingly taken, or mistaken for my own protagonist. It is unjust and particular. I never heard that my friend Moore was set down for a fire-worshipper on account of his Guebre; that Scott was identified with Roderick Dhu, or with Balfour of Burley; or that, notwithstanding all the magicians in *Thalaba*, any body has ever taken Mr. Southey for a conjuror; whereas I have had some difficulty in extricating me even from Manfred, who, as Mr. Southey slily observes in one of his articles in the *Quarterly*, 'met the devil on the Jungfrau, and bullied him:' and I answer Mr. Southey, who has apparently, in his poetical life, not been so successful against the great enemy, that, in this, Manfred exactly followed the sacred precept,—'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.'—I shall have more to say on the subject of this person—not the devil, but his most humble servant Mr. Southey—before I conclude; but, for the present, I must return to the article in the *Edinburgh Magazine*.

"In the course of this article, amidst some extraordinary observations, there occur the following words:—'It appears, in short, as if this miserable man, having exhausted *every species* of sensual

Digitized by Google

gratification,—having drained the cup of sin even to its bitterest dregs, were resolved to show us that he is no longer a human being even in his frailties,—but a cool, unconcerned fiend, laughing with a detestable glee over the whole of the better and worse elements of which human life is composed.' In another place there appears, 'the lurking-place of his selfish and polluted exile.'—'By my troth, these be bitter words!'—With regard to the first sentence, I shall content myself with observing, that it appears to have been composed for Sardanapalus, Tiberius, the Regent Duke of Orleans, or Louis XV.; and that I have copied it with as much indifference as I would a passage from Suetonius, or from any of the private memoirs of the regency, conceiving it to be amply refuted by the terms in which it is expressed, and to be utterly inapplicable to any private individual. On the words, 'lurking-place,' and 'selfish and polluted exile,' I have something more to say.—How far the capital city of a government, which survived the vicissitudes of thirteen hundred years, and might still have existed but for the treachery of Buonaparte, and the iniquity of his imitators,—a city which was the emporium of Europe when London and Edinburgh were dens of barbarians,—may be termed a 'lurking-place,' I leave to those who have seen or heard of Venice to decide. How far my exile may have been 'polluted,' it is not for me to say, because the word is a wide one, and, with some of its branches, may chance to overshadow the actions of most men; but that it has been '*selfish*' I deny. If, to the extent of my means and my power, and my information of their calamities, to have assisted many miserable beings, reduced by the decay of the place of their birth, and their consequent loss of substance—if to have never rejected an application which appeared founded on truth—if to have expended in this manner sums far out of proportion to my fortune, there and elsewhere, be selfish, then have I been selfish. To have done such things I do not deem much; but it is hard indeed to be compelled to recapitulate them in my own defence, by such accusations as that before me, like a panel before a jury calling testimonies to his character, or a soldier recording his services to obtain his discharge. If the person who has made the charge of 'selfishness' wishes to inform himself further on the subject, he may acquire, not what he would wish to find, but what will silence and shame him, by applying to the Consul-General of our nation, resident in the place, who will be in the case either to confirm or deny what I have asserted.

"I neither make, nor have ever made, pretensions to sanctity of demeanour, nor regularity of conduct; but my means have been expended principally on my own gratification, neither now nor heretofore, neither in England nor out of it; and it wants but a word from me, if I thought that word decent or necessary, to call forth the most willing witnesses, and at once witnesses and proofs, in England itself, to show that there are those who have derived not the mere temporary relief of a wretched boon, but the means which led them to immediate happiness and ultimate independence, by my want of that very '*selfishness*,' as grossly as falsely now imputed to my conduct.

"Had I been a selfish man—had I been a grasping man—had I

Digitized by Google

been, in the worldly sense of the word even a *prudent* man,—I should not be where I now am; I should not have taken the step which was the first that led to the events which have sunk and swoln a gulf between me and mine; but in this respect the truth will one day be made known: in the mean time, as Durande says, in the Cave of Montesinos, 'Patience, and shuffle the cards.'

"I bitterly feel the ostentation of this statement, the first of the kind I have ever made: I feel the degradation of being compelled to make it; but I also feel its *truth*, and I trust to feel it on my death-bed, should it be my lot to die there. I am not less sensible of the egotism of all this: but, alas! who have made me thus egotistical in my own defence, if not they, who, by perversely persisting in referring fiction to truth, and tracing poetry to life, and regarding characters of imagination as creatures of existence, have made me personally responsible for almost every poetical delineation which fancy and a particular bias of thought, may have tended to produce?

"The writer continues:—'Those who are acquainted, *as who is not?* with the *main* incidents of the private life of Lord B.,' etc. Assuredly, whoever may be acquainted with these 'main incidents,' the writer of the 'Remarks on *Don Juan*' is not, or he would use a very different language. That which I believe he alludes to as a 'main incident,' happened to be a very subordinate one, and the natural and almost inevitable consequence of events and circumstances long prior to the period at which it occurred. It is the last drop which makes the cup run over, and mine was already full.—But, to return to this man's charge: he accuses Lord B. of 'an elaborate satire on the character and manners of his wife.' From what part of *Don Juan* the writer has inferred this he himself best knows. As far as I recollect of the female characters in that production, there is but one who is depicted in ridiculous colours, or that could be interpreted as a satire upon any body. But here my poetical sins are again visited upon me, supposing that the poem be mine. If I depict a corsair, a misanthrope, a libertine, a chief of insurgents, or an infidel, he is set down to the author; and if, in a poem by no means ascertained to be my production, there appears a disagreeable, casuistical, and by no means respectable female pedant, it is set down for my wife. Is there any resemblance? If there be, it is in those who make it. I can see none. In my writings I have rarely described any character under a fictitious name: those of whom I have spoken have had their own—in many cases a stronger satire in itself than any which could be appended to it. But of real circumstances I have availed myself plentifully, both in the serious and the ludicrous—they are to poetry what landscapes are to the painter; but my *figures* are not portraits. It may even have happened, that I have seized on some events that have occurred under my own observation, or in my own family, as I would paint a view from my grounds, did it harmonise with my picture; but I never would introduce the likenesses of its living members, unless their features could be made as favourable to themselves as to the effect; which, in the above instance, would be extremely difficult.

Digitized by Google

"My learned brother proceeds to observe, that 'it is in vain for Lord B. to attempt in any way to justify his own behaviour in that affair; and now that he has so *openly* and *audaciously* invited enquiry and reproach, we do not see any good reason why he should not be plainly told so by the voice of his countrymen.' How far the 'openness' of an anonymous poem, and the 'audacity' of an imaginary character, which the writer supposes to be meant for Lady B., may be deemed to merit this formidable denunciation from their 'most sweet voices,' I neither know nor care; but when he tells me that I cannot 'in any way *justify* my own behaviour in that affair,' I acquiesce, because no man can '*justify*' himself until he knows of what he is accused; and I have never had—and, God knows, my whole desire has ever been to obtain it—any specific charge, in a tangible shape, submitted to me by the adversary, nor by others, unless the atrocities of public rumour and the mysterious silence of the lady's legal advisers may be deemed such. But is not the writer content with what has been already said and done? Has not 'the general voice of his countrymen' long ago pronounced upon the subject—sentence without trial, and condemnation without a charge? Have I not been exiled by ostracism, except that the shells which proscribed me were anonymous? Is the writer ignorant of the public opinion and the public conduct upon that occasion? If he is, I am not: the public will forget both, long before I shall cease to remember either.

"The man who is exiled by a faction has the consolation of thinking that he is a martyr; he is upheld by hope and the dignity of his cause, real or imaginary: he who withdraws from the pressure of debt may indulge in the thought that time and prudence will retrieve his circumstances: he who is condemned by the law, has a term to his banishment, or a dream of its abbreviation; or, it may be, the knowledge or the belief of some injustice of the law, or of its administration in his own particular; but he who is outlawed by general opinion, without the intervention of hostile politics, illegal judgment, or embarrassed circumstances, whether he be innocent or guilty, must undergo all the bitterness of exile, without hope, without pride, without alleviation. This case was mine. Upon what grounds the public founded their opinion, I am not aware; but it was general, and it was decisive. Of me or of mine they knew little, except that I had written what is called poetry, was a nobleman, had married, became a father, and was involved in differences with my wife and her relatives, no one knew why, because the persons complaining refused to state their grievances. The fashionable world was divided into parties, mine consisting of a very small minority: the reasonable world was naturally on the stronger side, which happened to be the lady's, as was most proper and polite. The press was active and scurrilous; and such was the rage of the day, that the unfortunate publication of two copies of verses, rather complimentary than otherwise to the subjects of both, was tortured into a species of crime, or constructive petty treason. I was accused of every monstrous vice by public rumour and private rancour: my name, which had been a knightly or a noble one since my fathers

Digitized by Google

helped to conquer the kingdom for William the Norman, was tainted. I felt that, if what was whispered, and muttered, and murmured, was true, I was unfit for England; if false, England was unfit for me. I withdrew: but this was not enough. In other countries, in Switzerland, in the shadow of the Alps, and by the blue depth of the lakes, I was pursued and breathed upon by the same blight. I crossed the mountains, but it was the same; so I went a little farther, and settled myself by the waves of the Adriatic, like the stag at bay, who betakes him to the waters.

"If I may judge by the statements of the few friends who gathered round me, the outcry of the period to which I allude was beyond all precedent, all parallel, even in those cases where political motives have sharpened slander and doubled enmity. I was advised not to go to the theatres, lest I should be hissed, nor to my duty in parliament, lest I should be insulted by the way; even on the day of my departure, my most intimate friend told me afterwards, that he was under apprehensions of violence from the people who might be assembled at the door of the carriage. However, I was not deterred by these counsels from seeing Kean in his best characters, nor from voting according to my principles; and with regard to the third and last apprehensions of my friends, I could not share in them, not being made acquainted with their extent, till some time after I had crossed the Channel. Even if I had been so, I am not of a nature to be much affected by men's anger, though I may feel hurt by their aversion. Against all individual outrage, I could protect or redress myself; and against that of a crowd, I should probably have been enabled to defend myself, with the assistance of others, as has been done on similar occasions.

"I retired from the country, perceiving that I was the object of general obloquy; I did not indeed imagine, like Jean Jacques Rousseau, that all mankind was in a conspiracy against me, though I had perhaps as good grounds for such a chimera as ever he had: but I perceived that I had to a great extent become personally obnoxious in England, perhaps through my own fault, but the fact was indisputable; the public in general would hardly have been so much excited against a more popular character, without at least an accusation or a charge of some kind actually expressed or substantiated, for I can hardly conceive that the common and every-day occurrence of a separation between man and wife could in itself produce so great a ferment. I shall say nothing of the usual complaints of 'being prejudiced,' 'condemned unheard,' 'unfairness,' 'partiality,' and so forth, the usual changes rung by parties who have had, or are to have, a trial; but I was a little surprised to find myself condemned without being favoured with the act of accusation, and to perceive in the absence of this portentous charge or charges, whatever it or they were to be, that every possible or impossible crime was rumoured to supply its place, and taken for granted. This could only occur in the case of a person very much disliked, and I knew no remedy, having already used to their extent whatever little powers I might possess of pleasing in society. I had no party in fashion, though I was afterwards told that there was one—but it was

Digitized by Google

not of my formation, nor did I then know of its existence—none in literature; and in politics I had voted with the Whigs, with precisely that importance which a Whig vote possesses in these Tory days, and with such personal acquaintance with the leaders in both houses as the society in which I lived sanctioned, but without claim or expectation of any thing like friendship from any one, except a few young men of my own age and standing, and a few others more advanced in life, which last it had been my fortune to serve in circumstances of difficulty. This was, in fact, to stand alone: and I recollect, some time after, Madame de Staël said to me in Switzerland, 'You should not have warred with the world—it will not do—it is too strong always for any individual: I myself once tried it in early life, but it will not do.' I perfectly acquiesce in the truth of this remark; but the world had done me the honour to begin the war; and, assuredly, if peace is only to be obtained by courting and paying tribute to it, I am not qualified to obtain its countenance. I thought, in the words of Campbell,

> "'Then wed thee to an exiled lot,
> And if the world hath loved thee not,
> Its absence may be borne.'

"I recollect, however, that, having been much hurt by Romilly's conduct, (he, having a general retainer for me, had acted as adviser to the adversary, alleging, on being reminded of his retainer, that he had forgotten it, as his clerk had so many,) I observed that some of those who were now eagerly laying the axe to my roof-tree, might see their own shaken, and feel a portion of what they had inflicted.—His fell, and crushed him.

"I have heard of, and believe, that there are human beings so constituted as to be insensible to injuries; but I believe that the best mode to avoid taking vengeance is to get out of the way of temptation. I hope that I may never have the opportunity, for I am not quite sure that I could resist it, having derived from my mother something of the '*pervervidum ingenium Scotorum*.' I have not sought, and shall not seek it, and perhaps it may never come in my path. I do not in this allude to the party who might be right or wrong; but to many who made her cause the pretext of their own bitterness. She, indeed, must have long avenged me in her own feelings; for whatever her reasons may have been (and she never adduced them to me at least), she probably neither contemplated nor conceived to what she became the means of conducting the father of her child, and the husband of her choice.

"So much for 'the general voice of his countrymen:' I will now speak of some in particular.

"In the beginning of the year 1817, an article appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, written, I believe, by Walter Scott,[1] doing great honour to him, and no disgrace to me, though both poetically and personally more than sufficiently favourable to the work and the

1. See *Quarterly Review*, vol. xvi. p. 172.

Digitized by Google

author of whom it treated. It was written at a time when a selfish man would not, and a timid one dared not, have said a word in favour of either; it was written by one to whom temporary public opinion had elevated me to the rank of a rival—a proud distinction, and unmerited; but which has not prevented me from feeling as a friend, nor him from more than corresponding to that sentiment. The article in question was written upon the Third Canto of *Childe Harold;* and after many observations, which it would as ill become me to repeat as to forget, concluded with 'a hope that I might yet return to England.' How this expression was received in England itself I am not acquainted, but it gave great offence at Rome to the respectable ten or twenty thousand English travellers then and there assembled. I did not visit Rome till some time after, so that I had no opportunity of knowing the fact; but I was informed, long afterwards, that the greatest indignation had been manifested in the enlightened Anglo-circle of that year, which happened to comprise within it—amidst a considerable leaven of Welbeck street and Devonshire Place, broken loose upon their travels—several really well-born and well-bred families, who did not the less participate in the feeling of the hour. '*Why* should he return to England?' was the general exclamation—I answer *why?* It is a question I have occasionally asked myself, and I never yet could give it a satisfactory reply. I had then no thoughts of returning, and if I have any now, they are of business, and not of pleasure. Amidst the ties that have been dashed to pieces, there are links yet entire, though the chain itself be broken. There are duties, and connections, which may one day require my presence—and I am a father. I have still some friends whom I wish to meet again, and it may be an enemy. These things, and those minuter details of business, which time accumulates during absence, in every man's affairs and property, may, and probably will, recall me to England; but I shall return with the same feelings with which I left it, in respect to itself, though altered with regard to individuals, as I have been more or less informed of their conduct since my departure; for it was only a considerable time after it that I was made acquainted with the real facts and full extent of some of their proceedings and language. My friends, like other friends, from conciliatory motives, withheld from me much that they could, and some things which they *should* have unfolded; however, that which is deferred is not lost—but it has been no fault of mine that it has been deferred at all.

"I have alluded to what is said to have passed at Rome merely to show that the sentiment which I have described was not confined to the English in England, and as forming part of my answer to the reproach cast upon what has been called my 'selfish exile,' and my 'voluntary exile.' 'Voluntary' it has been; for who would dwell among a people entertaining strong hostility against him? How far it has been 'selfish' has been already explained.

"I have now arrived at a passage describing me as having vented my 'spleen against the lofty-minded and virtuous men,' men 'whose virtues few indeed can equal;' meaning, I humbly presume,



Digitized by Google

the notorious triumvirate known by the name of 'Lake Poets' in their aggregate capacity, and by Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, when taken singly. I wish to say a word or two upon the virtues of one of those persons, public and private, for reasons which will soon appear.

"When I left England in April, 1816, ill in mind, in body, and in circumstances, I took up my residence at Coligny, by the lake of Geneva. The sole companion of my journey was a young physician,[1] who had to make his way in the world, and having seen very little of it, was naturally and laudably desirous of seeing more society than suited my present habits or my past experience. I therefore presented him to those gentlemen of Geneva for whom I had letters of introduction; and having thus seen him in a situation to make his own way, retired for my own part entirely from society, with the exception of one English family, living at about a quarter of a mile's distance from Diodati, and with the further exception of some occasional intercourse with Coppet at the wish of Madame de Staël. The English family to which I allude consisted of two ladies, a gentleman and his son, a boy of a year old.[2]

"One of '*these lofty-minded and virtuous men*,' in the words of the *Edinburgh Magazine*, made, I understand, about this time, or soon after, a tour in Switzerland. On his return to England, he circulated—and for any thing I know, invented—a report, that the gentleman to whom I have alluded and myself were living in promiscuous intercourse with two sisters, 'having formed a league of incest' (I quote the words as they were stated to me), and indulged himself on the natural comments upon such a conjunction, which are said to have been repeated publicly, with great complacency, by *another* of that poetical fraternity, of whom I shall say only, that even had the story been true, *he* should not have repeated it, as far as it regarded myself, except in sorrow. The tale itself requires but a word in answer—the ladies were *not* sisters, nor in any degree connected, except by the second marriage of their respective parents, a widower with a widow, both being the offspring of former marriages; neither of them were, in 1816, nineteen years old. 'Promiscuous intercourse' could hardly have disgusted the great patron of pantisocracy, (does Mr. Southey remember such a scheme?) but there was none.

"How far this man, who, as author of *Wat Tyler*, has been maintained by the Lord Chancellor guilty of a treasonable and blasphemous libel, and denounced in the House of Commons, by the upright and able member for Norwich, as a 'rancorous renegado,' be fit for sitting as a judge upon others, let others judge. He has said that for this expression 'he brands William Smith on the forehead as a calumniator,' and that 'the mark will outlast his epitaph.' How long William Smith's epitaph will last, and in what words it will be written, I know not, but William Smith's words

---

1. Dr. John Polidori.
2. Shelley and Mrs. Shelley, their son, and Jane Clairmont.

Digitized by Google

form the epitaph itself of Robert Southey. He has written *Wat Tyler*, and taken the office of poet laureate—he has, in the *Life of Henry Kirke White*, denominated reviewing 'the ungentle craft,' and has become a reviewer—he was one of the projectors of a scheme, called 'pantisocracy,' for having all things, including women, in common, (*query*, common women?) and he sets up as a moralist—he denounced the battle of Blenheim, and he praised the battle of Waterloo—he loved Mary Wollstoncraft, and he tried to blast the character of her daughter (one of the young females mentioned)—he wrote treason, and serves the king—he was the butt of the *Anti-jacobin*, and he is the prop of the *Quarterly Review;* licking the hands that smote him, eating the bread of his enemies, and internally writhing beneath his own contempt,—he would fain conceal, under anonymous bluster, and a vain endeavour to obtain the esteem of others, after having for ever lost his own, his leprous sense of his own degradation. What is there in such a man to 'envy?' Who ever envied the envious? Is it his birth, his name, his fame, or his virtues, that I am to 'envy?' I was born of the aristocracy, which he abhorred; and am sprung, by my mother, from the kings who preceded those whom he has hired himself to sing. It cannot, then, be his birth. As a poet, I have, for the past eight years, had nothing to apprehend from a competition; and for the future, 'that life to come in every poet's creed,' it is open to all. I will only remind Mr. Southey, in the words of a critic, who, if still living, would have annihilated Southey's literary existence now and hereafter, as the sworn foe of charlatans and impostors, from Macpherson downwards, that 'those dreams were Settle's once and Ogilby's;' and for my own part, I assure him, that whenever he and his sect are remembered, I shall be proud to be 'forgot.' That he is not content with his success as a poet may reasonably be believed—he has been the nine-pin of reviews; the *Edinburgh* knocked him down, and the *Quarterly* set him up; the government found him useful in the periodical line, and made a point of recommending his works to purchasers, so that he is occasionally bought, (I mean his books, as well as the author,) and may be found on the same shelf, if not upon the table, of most of the gentlemen employed in the different offices. With regard to his private virtues, I know nothing—of his principles, I have heard enough. As far as having been, to the best of my power, benevolent to others, I do not fear the comparison; and for the errors of the passions, was Mr. Southey *always* so tranquil and stainless? Did he *never* covet his neighbour's wife? Did he never calumniate his neighbour's wife's daughter, the offspring of her he coveted? So much for the apostle of pantisocracy.

"Of the 'lofty-minded, virtuous' Wordsworth, one anecdote will suffice to speak his sincerity. In a conversation with Mr. —— upon poetry, he concluded with, 'After all, I would not give five shillings for all that Southey has ever written.' Perhaps this calculation might rather show his esteem for five shillings than his low estimate of Dr. Southey; but considering that when he was in his need, and Southey had a shilling, Wordsworth is said to have had generally a sixpence out of it, it has an awkward sound in the

Digitized by Google

way of valuation. This anecdote was told me by persons who, if quoted by name, would prove that its genealogy is poetical as well as true. I can give my authority for this; and am ready to adduce it also for Mr. Southey's circulation of the falsehood before mentioned.

"Of Coleridge, I shall say nothing—*why*, he may divine.

"I have said more of these people than I intended in this place, being somewhat stirred by the remarks which induced me to commence upon the topic. I see nothing in these men as poets, or as individuals—little in their talents, and less in their characters, to prevent honest men from expressing for them considerable contempt, in prose or rhyme, as it may happen. Mr. Southey has the *Quarterly* for his field of rejoinder, and Mr. Wordsworth his postscripts to *Lyrical Ballads*, where the two great instances of the sublime are taken from himself and Milton. 'Over her own sweet voice the stock-dove broods;' that is to say, she has the pleasure of listening to herself, in common with Mr. Wordsworth upon most of his public appearances. 'What divinity doth hedge' these persons, that we should respect them? Is it Apollo? Are they not of those who called Dryden's *Ode* 'a drunken song?' who have discovered that Gray's *Elegy* is full of faults, (see Coleridge's *Life*, vol. i. *note*, for Wordsworth's kindness in pointing this out to him,) and have published what is allowed to be the very worst prose that ever was written, to prove that Pope was no poet, and that William Wordsworth is?

"In other points, are they respectable, or respected? Is it on the open avowal of apostasy, on the patronage of government, that their claim is founded? Who is there who esteems those parricides of their own principles? They are, in fact, well aware that the reward of their change has been any thing but honour. The times have preserved a respect for political consistency, and, even though changeable, honour the unchanged. Look at Moore: it will be long ere Southey meets with such a triumph in London as Moore met with in Dublin, even if the government subscribe for it, and set the money down to secret service. It was not less to the man than to the poet, to the tempted but unshaken patriot, to the not opulent but incorruptible fellow citizen, that the warm-hearted Irish paid the proudest of tributes. Mr. Southey may applaud himself to the world, but he has his own heartiest contempt; and the fury with which he foams against all who stand in the phalanx which he forsook, is, as William Smith described it, 'the rancour of the renegado,' the bad language of the prostitute who stands at the corner of the street, and showers her slang upon all, except those who may have bestowed upon her her 'little shilling.'

"Hence his quarterly overflowings, political and literary, in what he has himself termed 'the ungentle craft,' and his especial wrath against Mr. Leigh Hunt, notwithstanding that Hunt has done more for Wordsworth's reputation as a poet (such as it is), than all the Lakers could in their interchange of self-praises for the last twenty-five years.

"And here I wish to say a few words on the present state of

Digitized by Google

English poetry. That this is the age of the decline of English poetry will be doubted by few who have calmly considered the subject. That there are men of genius among the present poets makes little against the fact, because it has been well said, that 'next to him who forms the taste of his country, the greatest genius is he who corrupts it.' No one has ever denied genius to Marino, who corrupted not merely the taste of Italy, but that of all Europe for nearly a century. The great cause of the present deplorable state of English poetry is to be attributed to that absurd and systematic depreciation of Pope, in which, for the last few years, there has been a kind of epidemical concurrence. Men of the most opposite opinions have united upon this topic. Warton and Churchill began it, having borrowed the hint probably from the heroes of the *Dunciad*, and their own internal conviction that their proper reputation can be as nothing till the most perfect and harmonious of poets—he who, having no fault, has had REASON made his reproach—was reduced to what they conceived to be his level; but even *they* dared not degrade him below Dryden. Goldsmith, and Rogers, and Campbell, his most successful disciples; and Hayley, who, however feeble, has left one poem 'that will not be willingly let die' (the *Triumphs of Temper*), kept up the reputation of that pure and perfect style; and Crabbe, the first of living poets, has almost equalled the master. Then came Darwin, who was put down by a single poem in the *Antijacobin*;[1] and the Cruscans, from Merry to Jerningham, who were annihilated (if *Nothing* can be said to be annihilated) by Gifford, the last of the wholesome satirists.

"At the same time Mr. Southey was favouring the public with *Wat Tyler* and *Joan of Arc*, to the great glory of the Drama and Epos. I beg pardon, *Wat Tyler*, with *Peter Bell*, was still in MS., and it was not till after Mr. Southey had received his Malmsey butt, and Mr. Wordsworth * became qualified to gauge it, that the great revolutionary tragedy came before the public and the Court of Chancery. Wordsworth was peddling his lyrical ballads, and brooding a preface, to be succeeded in due course by a postscript, both couched in such prose as must give peculiar delight to those who have read the prefaces of Pope and Dryden; scarcely less celebrated for the beauty of their prose, than for the charms of their verse.

---

1. *The Loves of the Triangles.*

* Goldsmith has anticipated the definition of the Lake poetry, as far as such things can be defined. "Gentlemen, the present piece is not of your *common epic poems*, which come from the press like paper kites in summer; there are none of your Turnuses or Didos in it; *it is an historical description of nature.* I only beg you'll endeavour to make your souls in unison with mine, *and hear with the same enthusiasm with which I have written.*" Would not this have made a proper proem to the *Excursion*, and the poet and his pedler? It would have answered perfectly for that purpose, had it not unfortunately been written in good English.

Digitized by Google

Wordsworth is the reverse of Molière's gentleman who had been 'talking prose all his life, without knowing it;' for he thinks that he has been all his life writing both prose and verse, and neither of what he conceives to be such can be properly said to be either one or the other. Mr. Coleridge, the future *vates*, poet and seer of the *Morning Post*, (an honour also claimed by Mr. Fitzgerald, of the *Rejected Addresses*,) who ultimately prophesied the downfall of Buonaparte, to which he himself mainly contributed, by giving him the nickname of '*the Corsican*,' was then employed in predicating the damnation of Mr. Pitt, and the desolation of England, in the two very best copies of verses he ever wrote: to wit, the infernal eclogue of *Fire, Famine, and Slaughter*, and the *Ode to the departing Year*.

"These three personages, Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, had all of them a very natural antipathy to Pope; and I respect them for it, as the only original feeling or principle which they have contrived to preserve. But they have been joined in it by those who have joined them in nothing else: by the Edinburgh Reviewers, by the whole heterogeneous mass of living English poets, excepting Crabbe, Rogers, Gifford, and Campbell, who, both by precept and practice, have proved their adherence; and by me, who have shamefully deviated in practice, but have ever loved and honoured Pope's poetry with my whole soul, and hope to do so till my dying day. I would rather see all I have ever written lining the same trunk in which I actually read the eleventh book of a modern epic poem at Malta, in 1811, (I opened it to take out a change after the paroxysm of a tertian, in the absence of my servant, and found it lined with the name of the maker, Eyre, Cockspur Street, and with the epic poetry alluded to,) than sacrifice what I firmly believe in as the Christianity of English poetry, the poetry of Pope.

"But the Edinburgh Reviewers, and the Lakers, and Hunt and his school, and every body else with their school, and even Moore without a school, and dilettanti lecturers at institutions, and elderly gentlemen who translate and imitate, and young ladies who listen and repeat, baronets who draw indifferent frontispieces for bad poets, and noblemen who let them dine with them in the country, the small body of the wits and the great body of the blues, have latterly united in a depreciation, of which their fathers would have been as much ashamed as their children will be. In the mean time, what have we got instead? The Lake school, which begun with an epic poem, 'written in six weeks,' (so *Joan of Arc* proclaimed herself,) and finished with a ballad composed in twenty years, as *Peter Bell's* creator takes care to inform the few who will enquire. What have we got instead? A deluge of flimsy and unintelligible romances, imitated from Scott and myself, who have both made the best of our bad materials and erroneous system. What have we got instead? *Madoc*, which is neither an epic nor any thing else; *Thalaba, Kehama, Gebir*, and such gibberish, written in all metres and in no language. Hunt, who had powers to have made the *Story of Rimini* as perfect as a fable of Dryden, has thought fit to

Digitized by Google

sacrifice his genius and his taste to some unintelligible notions of Wordsworth, which I defy him to explain. Moore has—— But why continue?—All, with the exception of Crabbe, Rogers, and Campbell, who may be considered as having taken their station, will, by the blessing of God, survive their own reputation, without attaining any very extraordinary period of longevity. Of course there must be a still further exception in favour of those who, having never obtained any reputation at all, unless it be among provincial literati, and their own families, have none to lose; and of Moore, who, as the Burns of Ireland, possesses a fame which cannot be lost.

"The greater part of the poets mentioned, however, have been able to gather together a few followers. A paper of the *Connoisseur* says, that 'it is observed by the French, that a cat, a priest, and an old woman, are sufficient to constitute a religious sect in England.' The same number of animals, with some difference in kind, will suffice for a poetical one. If we take Sir George Beaumont instead of the priest, and Mr. Wordsworth for the old woman, we shall nearly complete the quota required; but I fear that Mr. Southey will but indifferently represent the CAT, having shown himself but too distinctly to be of a species to which that noble creature is peculiarly hostile.

"Nevertheless, I will not go so far as Wordsworth in his post-script, who pretends that *no* great poet ever had immediate fame; which being interpreted, means that William Wordsworth is not quite so much read by his cotemporaries as might be desirable. This assertion is as false as it is foolish. Homer's glory depended upon his present popularity: he recited,—and, without the strongest impression of the moment, who would have gotten the *Iliad* by heart, and given it to tradition? Ennius, Terence, Plautus, Lucretius, Horace, Virgil, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Sappho, Anacreon, Theocritus, all the great poets of antiquity, were the delight of their cotemporaries. The very existence of a poet, previous to the invention of printing, depended upon his present popularity; and how often has it impaired his future fame? Hardly ever. History informs us that the best have come down to us. The reason is evident; the most popular found the greatest number of transcribers for their MSS., and that the taste of their cotemporaries was corrupt can hardly be avouched by the moderns, the mightiest of whom have but barely approached them. Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso, were all the darlings of the cotemporary reader. Dante's Poem was celebrated long before his death: and, not long after it, States negotiated for his ashes, and disputed for the sites of the composition of the *Divina Commedia*. Petrarch was crowned in the Capitol. Ariosto was permitted to pass free by the public robber who had read the *Orlando Furioso*. I would not recommend Mr. Wordsworth to try the same experiment with his *Smugglers*. Tasso, notwithstanding the criticisms of the Cruscanti, would have been crowned in the Capitol, but for his death.

"It is easy to prove the immediate popularity of the chief poets of the only modern nation in Europe that has a poetical language, the Italian. In our own, Shakspeare, Spenser, Jonson, Waller, Dryden,

Digitized by Google

Congreve, Pope, Young, Shenstone, Thomson, Johnson, Goldsmith, Gray, were all as popular in their lives as since. Gray's *Elegy* pleased instantly, and eternally. His *Odes* did not, nor yet do they, please like his *Elegy*. Milton's politics kept him down. But the Epigram of Dryden,[1] and the very sale of his work, in proportion to the less reading time of its publication, prove him to have been honoured by his cotemporaries. I will venture to assert, that the sale of the *Paradise Lost* was greater in the first four years after its publication, than that of *The Excursion* in the same number, with the difference of nearly a century and a half between them of time, and of thousands in point of general readers. Notwithstanding Mr. Wordsworth's having pressed Milton into his service as one of those not presently popular, to favour his own purpose of proving that our grandchildren will read *him* (the said William Wordsworth,) I would recommend him to begin first with our grandmothers. But he need not be alarmed; he may yet live to see all the envies pass away, as Darwin, and Seward, and Hoole, and Hole, and Hoyle have passed away; but their declension will not be his ascension: he is essentially a bad writer, and all the failures of others can never strengthen him. He may have a sect, but he will never have a public; and his '*audience*' will always be '*few*,' without being '*fit*,'—except for Bedlam.

"It may be asked, why, having this opinion of the present state of poetry in England, and having had it long, as my friends and others well knew—possessing, or having possessed too, as a writer, the ear of the public for the time being—I have not adopted a different plan in my own compositions, and endeavoured to correct rather than encourage the taste of the day. To this I would answer, that it is easier to perceive the wrong than to pursue the right, and that I have never contemplated the prospect 'of filling [with *Peter Bell*, see its Preface] permanently a station in the literature of the country.' Those who know me best, know this, and that I have been considerably astonished at the temporary success of my works, having flattered no person and no party, and expressed opinions which are not those of the general reader. Could I have anticipated the degree of attention which has been accorded me, assuredly I would have studied more to deserve it. But I have lived in far countries abroad, or in the agitating world at home, which was not favourable to study or reflection; so that almost all I have written has been mere passion,—passion, it is true, of different kinds, but always passion: for in me (if it be not an Irishism to say so) my *indifference* was a kind of passion, the result of experience, and not the philosophy of nature. Writing grows a habit, like a woman's gallantry: there are women who have had no intrigue, but few who have had but one only: so there are millions of men who have never written a book, but few who have written only one. And thus, having written once, I wrote on; encouraged no doubt by the success

---

1. The lines under Milton's picture—

"Three poets in three distant ages born," etc.

Digitized by Google

of the moment, yet by no means anticipating its duration, and I will venture to say, scarcely even wishing it. But then I did other things besides write, which by no means contributed either to improve my writings or my prosperity.

"I have thus expressed publicly upon the poetry of the day the opinion I have long entertained and expressed of it to all who have asked it, and to some who would rather not have heard it: as I told Moore not very long ago, 'we are all wrong except Rogers, Crabbe, and Campbell.' Without being old in years, I am old in days, and do not feel the adequate spirit within me to attempt a work which should show what I think right in poetry, and must content myself with having denounced what is wrong. There are, I trust, younger spirits rising up in England, who, escaping the contagion which has swept away poetry from our literature, will recall it to their country, such as it once was and may still be.

"In the mean time, the best sign of amendment will be repentance, and new and frequent editions of Pope and Dryden.

"There will be found as comfortable metaphysics, and ten times more poetry in the *Essay on Man*, than in the *Excursion*. If you search for passion, where is it to be found stronger than in the epistle to Eloisa from Abelard, or in *Palamon and Arcite*? Do you wish for invention, imagination, sublimity, character? seek them in the *Rape of the Lock*, the *Fables* of Dryden, the *Ode of Saint Cecilia's Day*, and *Absalom and Achitophel*: you will discover in these two poets only, *all* for which you must ransack innumerable metres, and God only knows how many *writers* of the day, without finding a tittle of the same qualities,—with the addition, too, of wit, of which the latter have none. I have not, however, forgotten *Thomas Brown the Younger*, nor the *Fudge Family*, nor Whistlecraft; but that is not wit—it is humour. I will say nothing of the harmony of Pope and Dryden in comparison, for there is not a living poet (except Rogers, Gifford, Campbell, and Crabbe,) who can write an heroic couplet. The fact is, that the exquisite beauty of their versification has withdrawn the public attention from their other excellences, as the vulgar eye will rest more upon the splendour of the uniform than the quality of the troops. It is this very harmony, particularly in Pope, which has raised the vulgar and atrocious cant against him:—because his versification is perfect, it is assumed that it is his only perfection; because his truths are so clear, it is asserted that he has no invention; and because he is always intelligible, it is taken for granted that he has no genius. We are sneeringly told that he is the 'Poet of Reason,' as if this was a reason for his being no poet. Taking passage for passage, I will undertake to cite more lines teeming with *imagination* from Pope than from any *two* living poets, be they who they may. To take an instance at random from a species of composition not very favourable to imagination—Satire: set down the character of Sporus,* with all the wonderful play of fancy which is

* "Let Sporus tremble—*A.* What? that thing of silk,
*Sporus*, that mere white curd of ass's milk?

Digitized by Google

scattered over it, and place by its side an equal number of verses, from any two existing poets, of the same power and the same variety —where will you find them?

"I merely mention one instance of many, in reply to the injustice done to the memory of him who harmonised our poetical language. The attorneys' clerks, and other self-educated genii, found it easier to distort themselves to the new models, than to toil after the symmetry of him who had enchanted their fathers. They were besides smitten by being told that the new school were to revive the language of Queen Elizabeth, the true English: as every body in the reign of Queen Anne wrote no better than French, by a species of literary treason.

"Blank verse, which, unless in the drama, no one except Milton ever wrote who could rhyme, became the order of the day,—or else such rhyme as looked still blanker than the verse without it. I am aware that Johnson has said, after some hesitation, that he could not 'prevail upon himself to wish that Milton had been a rhymer.' The opinions of that truly great man, whom it is also the present fashion to decry, will ever be received by me with that deference which time will restore to him from all; but, with all humility, I am not persuaded that the *Paradise Lost* would not have been more nobly

---

Satire or sense, alas! can Sporus feel?
Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?
*P.* Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings,
This painted child of dirt, that stinks and stings;
Whose buzz the witty and the fair annoys,
Yet wit ne'er tastes, and beauty ne'er enjoys;
So well-bred spaniels civilly delight
In mumbling of the game they dare not bite.
Eternal smiles his emptiness betray,
As shallow streams run dimpling all the way.
Whether in florid impotence he speaks,
And, as the prompter breathes, the puppet squeaks;
Or at the ear of Eve, familiar toad,
Half froth, half venom, spits himself abroad,
In puns, or politics, or tales, or lies,
Or spite, or smut, or rhymes, or blasphemies.
His wit all see-saw, between *that* and *this*.
Now high, now low, now master up, now miss,
And he himself one vile antithesis.
Amphibious thing! that acting either part,
The trifling head, or the corrupted heart,
Fop at the toilet, flatterer at the board,
Now trips a lady, and now struts a lord.
Eve's tempter thus the Rabbins have express'd,
A cherub's face, a reptile all the rest,
Beauty that shocks you, parts that none will trust,
Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust."

*Prol. to Sat.*

Digitized by Google

conveyed to posterity, not perhaps in heroic couplets, although even *they* could sustain the subject if well balanced, but in the stanza of Spenser or of Tasso, or in the terza rima of Dante, which the powers of Milton could easily have grafted on our language. The *Seasons* of Thomson would have been better in rhyme, although still inferior to his *Castle of Indolence;* and Mr. Southey's *Joan of Arc* no worse, although it might have taken up six months instead of weeks in the composition. I recommend also to the lovers of lyrics the perusal of the present laureate's *Odes* by the side of Dryden's on Saint Cecilia, but let him be sure to read *first* those of Mr. Southey.

"To the heaven-born genii and inspired young scriveners of the day much of this will appear paradox: it will appear so even to the higher order of our critics; but it was a truism twenty years ago, and it will be a reacknowledged truth in ten more. In the mean time, I will conclude with two quotations, both intended for some of my old classical friends who have still enough of Cambridge about them to think themselves honoured by having had John Dryden as a predecessor in their college, and to recollect that their earliest English poetical pleasures were drawn from the 'little nightingale' of Twickenham. The first is from the notes to the Poem of the *Friends*.[1]

"'It is only within the last twenty or thirty years that those notable discoveries in criticisms have been made which have taught our recent versifiers to undervalue this energetic, melodious, and moral poet. The consequences of this want of due esteem for a writer whom the good sense of our predecessors had raised to his proper station have been NUMEROUS AND DEGRADING ENOUGH. This is not the place to enter into the subject, even as far as it *affects our poetical numbers alone*, and there is matter of more importance that requires present reflection.'

"The second is from the volume of a young person learning to write poetry, and beginning by teaching the art. Hear him[2]—

"'But ye were dead
To things ye knew not of—were closely wed

---

1. *The Friends: a Poem.* In Four Books. By the Rev. Francis Hodgson, A.M. (1818). (See p. 303, *note* 1.)

2. In a manuscript note on this passage of the pamphlet, dated Nov. 12, 1821, Byron wrote as follows: "Mr. Keats died at Rome about a year after this was written, of a decline produced by his having burst a blood-vessel on reading the article on his *Endymion* in the *Quarterly Review*. I have read the article before and since; and although it is bitter, I do not think that a man should permit himself to be killed by it. But a young man little dreams what he must inevitably encounter in the course of a life ambitious of public notice. My indignation at Mr. Keats's depreciation of Pope has hardly permitted me to do justice to his own genius, which, malgré all the fantastic fopperies of his style, was undoubtedly of great promise. His fragment of *Hyperion* seems actually inspired by the Titans, and is as sublime as Æschylus.

Digitized by Google

To musty laws lined out with wretched rule
And compass vile; so that ye taught a school *
Of *dolts* to *smooth*, *inlay*, and *chip*, and *fit*,
Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's wit,
*Their verses tallied. Easy was the task:*
A thousand handicraftsmen wore the mask
Of poesy. Ill-fated, impious race,
That blasphemed the bright lyrist to his face,
And did not know it; no, they went about
Holding a poor *decrepit* standard out
Mark'd with most flimsy mottos, and in large
The name of *one* Boileau!'

"A little before, the manner of Pope is termed,

"'A *scism*,†
Nurtured by *foppery* and barbarism,
Made great Apollo blush for this his land.'‡

---

He is a loss to our literature; and the more so, as he himself before his death, is said to have been persuaded that he had not taken the right line, and was reforming his style upon the more classical models of the language."

* It was at least a *grammar* "school."

† So spelt by the author.

‡ As a balance to these lines, and to the sense and sentiment of the new school, I will put down a passage or two from Pope's *earliest* poems, taken at random:—

"Envy her own snakes shall feel,
And Persecution mourn her broken wheel,
There Faction roar, Rebellion bite her chain,
And gasping Furies thirst for blood in vain."

"Ah! what avails his glossy varying dyes,
His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes;
The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold."

"Round broken columns clasping ivy twined;
O'er heaps of ruin stalk'd the stately hind;
The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,
And savage howlings fill the sacred quires."

"Hail, bards triumphant! born in happier days;
Immortal heirs of universal praise!
Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;
Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,
And worlds applaud that must not yet be found!
Oh may some spark of your celestial fire,
The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,

Digitized by Google

"I thought '*foppery*,' was a consequence of *refinement*, but *n'importe*.

"The above will suffice to show the notions entertained by the new performers on the English lyre of him who made it most tuneable, and the great improvements of their own 'variazioni.'

"The writer of this is a tadpole of the Lakes, a young disciple of the six or seven new schools, in which he has learnt to write such lines and such sentiments as the above. He says 'easy was the task' of imitating Pope, or it may be of equalling him, I presume. I recommend him to try before he is so positive on the subject, and then compare what he will have *then* written and what he has *now* written with the humblest and earliest compositions of Pope, produced in years still more youthful than those of Mr. Keats when he invented his new 'Essay on Criticism,' entitled *Sleep and Poetry* (an ominous title,) from whence the above canons are taken. Pope's was written at nineteen, and published at twenty-two.

---

(That on weak wings, from far pursues your flights;
Glows while he reads, but trembles as he writes),
To teach vain wits a science little known,
T' admire superior sense, and doubt their own!"

"Amphion there the loud creating lyre
Strikes, and behold a sudden Thebes aspire!
Cithæron's echoes answer to his call,
And half the mountain rolls into a wall."

"So Zembla's rocks, the beauteous work of frost,
Rise white in air, and glitter o'er the coast;
Pale suns, unfelt, at distance roll away,
And on th' impassive ice the lightnings play;
Eternal snows the growing mass supply,
Till the bright mountains prop th' incumbent sky,
As Atlas fix'd, each hoary pile appears,
The gather'd winter of a thousand years."

"Thus, when we view some well-proportion'd dome,
The world's just wonder, and even thine, O Rome!
No single parts unequally surprise,
All comes united to th' admiring eyes:
No monstrous height, or breadth, or length appear;
The whole at once is bold and regular."

A thousand similar passages crowd upon me, all composed by Pope before his *two-and-twentieth* year; and yet it is contended that he is no poet, and we are told so in such lines as I beg the reader to compare with these *youthful* verses of the "no poet." Must we repeat the question of Johnson, "*If Pope is not a poet, where is poetry to be found?*" Even in *descriptive* poetry, the *lowest* department of the art, he will be found, on a fair examination, to surpass any living writer.

Digitized by Google

"Such are the triumphs of the new schools, and such their scholars. The disciples of Pope were Johnson, Goldsmith, Rogers, Campbell, Crabbe, Gifford, Matthias, Hayley, and the author of the *Paradise of Coquettes;* to whom may be added Richards, Heber, Wrangham, Bland, Hodgson, Merivale, and others who have not had their full fame, because 'the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong,' and because there is a fortune in fame as in all other things. Now, of *all* the new schools—I say *all*, 'for, like Legion, they are many'—has there appeared a single scholar who has not made his master ashamed of him? unless it be Sotheby, who has imitated every body, and occasionally surpassed his models. Scott found peculiar favour and imitation among the fair sex: there was Miss Holford, and Miss Mitford, and Miss Francis; but, with the greatest respect be it spoken, none of his imitators did much honour to the original, except Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd, until the appearance of *The Bridal of Triermain*, and *Harold the Dauntless*, which in the opinion of some equalled if not surpassed him; and lo! after three or four years they turned out to be the Master's own compositions. Have Southey, or Coleridge, or t'other fellow, made a follower of renown? Wilson never did well till he set up for himself in the *City of the Plague*. Has Moore, or any other living writer of reputation, had a tolerable imitator, or rather disciple? Now, it is remarkable, that almost all the followers of Pope, whom I have named, have produced beautiful and standard works; and it was not the number of his imitators who finally hurt his fame, but the despair of imitation, and the *ease* of *not* imitating him sufficiently. This, and the same reason which induced the Athenian burgher to vote for the banishment of Aristides, 'because he was tired of always hearing him called *the Just*,' have produced the temporary exile of Pope from the State of Literature. But the term of his ostracism will expire, and the sooner the better, not for him, but for those who banished him, and for the coming generation, who

"'Will blush to find their fathers were his foes.'

"I will now return to the writer of the article which has drawn forth these remarks, whom I honestly take to be John Wilson, a man of great powers and acquirements, well known to the public as the author of the *City of the Plague*, *Isle of Palms*, and other productions. I take the liberty of naming him, by the same species of courtesy which has induced him to designate me as the author of *Don Juan*. Upon the score of the Lake Poets, he may perhaps recall to mind that I merely express an opinion long ago entertained and specified in a letter to Mr. James Hogg, which he the said James Hogg, somewhat contrary to the law of pens, showed to Mr. John Wilson, in the year 1814, as he himself informed me in his answer, telling me by way of apology, that 'he'd be damned if he could help it;' and I am not conscious of any thing like 'envy' or 'exacerbation' at this moment which induces me to think better or worse of Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge as poets than I do now, although I do know one or two things more which have added to my contempt for them as individuals. And, in return for

Digitized by Google

Mr. Wilson's invective, I shall content myself with asking one question; Did he never compose, recite, or sing any parody or parodies upon the Psalms (of what nature this deponent saith not,) in certain jovial meetings of the youth of Edinburgh? It is not that I think any great harm if he did; because it seems to me that all depends upon the intention of such a parody. If it be meant to throw ridicule on the sacred original, it is a sin; if it be intended to burlesque the profane subject, or to inculcate a moral truth, it is none. If it were, the *unbelievers' Creed*, the many political parodies of various parts of the Scriptures and liturgy, particularly a celebrated one of the Lord's Prayer, and the beautiful moral parable in favour of toleration by Franklin, which has often been taken for a real extract from Genesis, would all be sins of a damning nature. But I wish to know, if Mr. Wilson ever has done this, and *if* he *has, why he* should be so very angry with similar portions of *Don Juan*?—Did no 'parody profane' appear in any of the earlier numbers of *Blackwood's Magazine*?

"I will now conclude this long answer to a short article, repenting of having said so much in my own defence, and so little on the 'crying, left-hand fallings off and national defections' of the poetry of the present day. Having said this, I can hardly be expected to defend *Don Juan*, or any other '*living*' poetry, and shall not make the attempt. And although I do not think that Mr. John Wilson has in this instance treated me with candour or consideration, I trust that the tone I have used in speaking of him personally will prove that I bear him as little malice as I really believe at the *bottom of his heart* he bears towards me; but the duties of an editor, like those of a tax-gatherer, are paramount and peremptory. I have done.

"BYRON."

Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX X.

## THOMAS MULOCK'S *ANSWER GIVEN BY THE GOSPEL TO THE ATHEISM OF ALL AGES.* LONDON, 1819.

(See p. 416, *note* 1.)

BYRON refers to two passages in the above-mentioned work.

1. *Note* (pp. 43, 44)—

"Critics are perpetually perplexed in attempting to account for the moody and misanthropic strain of mystic melancholy, intermixed with the expression of sharper sorrows, which runs through the productions of the greatest of living poets, and perhaps of all poets, Lord Byron.—But the Christian is enabled to behold in those matchless (uninspired) effusions the outpourings of a *heart not right with God*, and awfully preyed upon by vulture regrets and disappointments. The wild, agonising wailings of Lord Byron's lyre, are the piercing plaints of an exhausted voluptuary, conscious of an aching void in the soul, which, uninstructed by terrible experience, he seeks to supply by sensible pleasures. The volcanic bursts of burning exclamation, in which Lord Byron fearfully pours forth his internal sufferings, clearly betoken great spiritual conflict, in which some chronic vice—*some sin that doth most easily beset him*, wars against his convictions, which, as heavenly chastenings, have been, with a purpose of mercy, inflicted upon him. *Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.* It may be also remarked, that Lord Byron's poetry contains glimpses of the great doctrine of human depravity, a deeper insight into which would, under the divine guidance, lead him to Jesus, *the repairer of the breach—the restorer of paths to dwell in.*

"In the religion of Christ, this 'man of many thoughts,' would find a spiritual sublimity, to which all the grandeur of his most unearthly aspirations would adoringly bow. His talents would be tamed by a single glance at the *excellency of the knowledge of Christ* Jesus; and his passions, which no mortal monitions can quell, would gradually sink under the sway of that celestial wisdom, which

Digitized by Google

is *first pure, and then peaceable.* No slight portion of Lord Byron's misery is associated with a sense of isolation. He seems to himself to be a fated voyager upon an ocean untracked by any other keel. But if the God of all grace shall show him the *secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is,* his monopoly of wretchedness will be quickly abandoned. He will find that, though man may not, and perhaps cannot, sound the depths of his mental distress, there is a mercyseat to which he may approach through an everlasting Mediator, where his woes will be intelligible—being interpreted by that great and gracious High Priest, who was himself *made perfect through sufferings, and who, though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.* At present, Lord Byron is interrogating the air, and asking with the similarly exercised sufferer in Holy Writ, *Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable?* Let Lord Byron, and all other 'wandering outlaws of their own dark minds,' *search the scriptures.* In the Bible, when unsealed to them by the Spirit of the living God, they will discover what their harrowing introspection of themselves—their jaundiced survey of others, and their carnal communings with external nature,—will never reveal to them—the cause and the cure of their calamities. They will see that sin, the sin of their wholly ruined nature, is *within* them, and that salvation is *without* them; and that the burthen under which they groan, (felt by millions with different degrees of intensity, according to the constitution of their minds, the vicissitudes in their condition, and the *variform abuse* of bodily gifts), cannot be removed but by an almighty arm. *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.*"

2. *Note* (pp. 99, 100)—

"Lord Byron whose awful state of mind enables him to view, with supernatural strength of vision, the fallacy of carnal life, without discerning the *fulness of him who filleth all in all*—has wrought into a single stanza more solid truth than can be detected in the philosophy and theology of all ages. But he greatly errs in concluding, that exhibitions of human suffering would have the slightest effect in quelling human passions. This is the prerogative-royal of sovereign grace. Where, it may be asked, are the converts made to purity and peace by Lord Byron's terrific disclosure of the woes which inly torture his own bared and burning bosom? Sin is deaf as well as blind, and *will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.*"



Digitized by Google

# APPENDIX XI.

## BYRON'S BALLAD ON HOBHOUSE.

(See p. 423.)

HOBHOUSE was seriously annoyed with Byron for writing, and with Murray for showing, the ballad printed on p. 423. A version of the lines was printed in the *Morning Post* for April 15, 1820, but without the allusion to the Whig Club at Cambridge, which gave Hobhouse the greatest offence.

In this Appendix are printed (1) the ballad as it appeared in the *Morning Post;* and (2) Hobhouse's letter to John Murray.

(1) To the Editor of the *Morning Post.*

"SIR,—A copy of verses, to the tune of '*My boy Tammy,*' are repeated in literary circles, and said to be written by a Noble Lord of the highest poetical fame, upon his quondam friend and annotator. My memory does not enable me to repeat more than the first two verses quite accurately, but the humourous spirit of the Song may be gathered from these—

"Why were you put in Lob's pond,
My boy, HOBBY O? (*bis*)
For telling folks to pull the House
By the ears into the Lobby O!

"Who are your grand Reformers now,
My boy, HOBBY O? (*bis*)
There's me and BURDETT,—gentlemen,
And Blackguards HUNT and COBBY O!

"Have you no other friends but these,
My boy, HOBBY O? (*bis*)
Yes, Southwark's KNIGHT, the County BYNG,
And in the City, BOBBY O!

Digitized by Google

"How do you recreate yourselves,
My boy, HOBBY O? (*bis*)
We spout with tavern Radicals,
And drink with them hobby-nobby O!

"What purpose can such folly work,
My boy, HOBBY O? (*bis*)
It gives our partisans a chance
Watches to twitch from fob-by O!

"Have they no higher game in view,
My boy, HOBBY O? (*bis*)
Oh yes; to stir the people up,
And then to head the mob-by O!

"But sure they'll at their ruin pause,
My boy, HOBBY O? (*bis*)
No! they'd see King and Parliament
Both d—d without a sob-by O!

"But, if they fail, they'll be hang'd up,
My boy, HOBBY O? (*bis*)
Why, then, they'll swing, like better men,
And that will end the job-by O!

"PHILO-RADICLE."

(2) J. C. Hobhouse to John Murray.

"2, Hanover Square, November, 1820.

"I have received your letter, and return to you Lord Byron's. I shall tell you very frankly, because I think it much better to speak a little of a man to his face than to say a great deal about him behind his back, that I think you have not treated me as I deserved, nor as might have been expected from that friendly intercourse which has subsisted between us for so many years. Had Lord Byron transmitted to me a lampoon on you, I should, if I know myself at all, either have put it into the fire without delivery, or should have sent it at once to you. I should not have given it a circulation for the gratification of all the small wits at the great and little houses, where no treat is so agreeable as to find a man laughing at his friend. In this case, the whole coterie of the very shabbiest party that ever disgraced and divided a nation—I mean the Whigs—are, I know, chuckling over that silly charge made by Mr. Lamb on the hustings, and now confirmed by Lord Byron, of my having belonged to a Whig club at Cambridge. Such a Whig as I then was, I am now. I had no notion that the name implied selfishness and subserviency, and desertion of the most important principles for the sake of the least important interest. I had no notion that it implied anything more than an attachment to the principles the ascendency of which expelled the Stuarts from the

Digitized by Google

Throne. Lord Byron belonged to this Cambridge club, and desired me to scratch out his name, on account of the criticism in the *Edinburgh Review* on his early poems; but, exercising my discretion on the subject, I did not erase his name, but reconciled him to the said Whigs.

"The members of the club were but few, and with those who have any marked politics amongst them, I continue to agree at this day. They were but ten, and you must know most of them—Mr. W. Ponsonby, Mr. George O'Callaghan, the Duke of Devonshire, Mr. Dominick Browne, Mr. Henry Pearce, Mr. Kinnaird, Lord Tavistock, Lord Ellenborough, Lord Byron, and myself. I was not, as Lord Byron says in the song, the founder of this club; on the contrary, thinking myself of mighty importance in those days, I recollect very well that some difficulty attended my consenting to belong to the club, and I have by me a letter from Lord Tavistock, in which the distinction between being a Whig *party* man and a Revolution Whig is strongly insisted upon.

"I have troubled you with this detail in consequence of Lord Byron's charge, which he, who despises and defies, and has lampooned the Whigs all round, only invented out of wantonness, and for the sake of annoying me—and he has certainly succeeded, thanks to your circulating this filthy ballad. As for his Lordship's vulgar notions about the *mob*, they are very fit for the Poet of the *Morning Post*, and for nobody else. Nothing in the ballad annoyed me but the charge about the Cambridge club, because nothing else had the semblance of truth; and I own it has hurt me very much to find Lord Byron playing into the hands of the Holland House sycophants, for whom he has himself the most sovereign contempt, and whom in other days I myself have tried to induce him to tolerate.

"I shall say no more on this unpleasant subject except that, by a letter which I have just received from Lord Byron, I think he is ashamed of his song. I shall certainly speak as plainly to him as I have taken the liberty to do to you on this matter. He was very wanton and you very indiscreet; but I trust neither one nor the other meant mischief, and there's an end of it. Do not aggravate matters by telling how much I have been annoyed. Lord Byron has sent me a list of his new poems and some prose, all of which he requests me to prepare for the press for him. The monied arrangement is to be made by Mr. Kinnaird. When you are ready for me, the materials may be sent to me at this place, where I have taken up my abode for the season.

"I remain, very truly yours,
"JOHN CAM HOBHOUSE."

END OF VOL. IV.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

305


Digitized by Google

This book should be returned to the Library on or before the last date stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred by retaining it beyond the specified time.

Please return promptly.

DUE MAY 11 '46 F
MAY 30 '59 H
AUG 29 '60 H
DUE FEB 20 '47 B
FEB 15 '68 H
DUE MAR 31 '48
DUE MAY 24 '48
DEC 17 '51 H
MAY 5 '52 H
CANCELLED
CANCELLED
184073

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google